

James Reginald Graham
with fond love
from his Mother
Jane Hermione Graham

NOTES
OF A
SPORTING EXPEDITION.



NOTES
OF A
SPORTING EXPEDITION
IN THE
FAR WEST OF CANADA

1847

BY
FREDERICK ULRIC GRAHAM

Explanatory Footnotes by
JANE HERMIONE GRAHAM



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Note.—Illustrations of Buffalo Hunting are copies of coloured
prints brought home by FREDERICK GRAHAM from
Canada in 1847.

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N.B.—This Journal was written, day by day, on Steamers, in Canoes, at the Forts, in Tents, or by the Camp-fires in the open,—in small pocket-books easily carried; and then, on Frederick Graham's return home was copied out, chiefly by a young sister still in the schoolroom, and by others of the family, and the manuscript remained untouched for fifty years,—when Hermione Graham had it typed and printed in its present form, without however adding anything to the original, with the exception of the explanatory foot-notes where these were required to make the sense clearer for sons, daughters, and grandchildren.

NOVEMBER, 1897.

Notes of a Sporting Tour.

VOYAGE OUT, AND JOURNEY TO SAULT FORT.

APRIL 19TH TO MAY 20TH.

April 19th.—Left town very unwell. Worse on arrival at Liverpool. Found Corbet* waiting to assist debarkation of traps, &c.

April 20th.—Worse next morning. Found the *Caledonia* lying a mile from the quay. We were conveyed on board by a ferry steamer, and bundled out in glorious confusion. Turned in immediately, and lay *perdu* for the next ten days, which causes an *hiatus valde defendus* in my interesting narrative, the interim, as far as I was concerned, being filled up with a mixture of disagreeable sights, sounds, and smells, only to be appreciated by those who have crossed the Atlantic in a crowded steamer, and in a heavy gale from the north-west; the monotony being varied once a day by a visit from that indispensable character commonly called ‘sawbones.’ This one was a great-nephew of Dr. Paley, and uncommonly like the family, therefore as ugly as sin.

* Vincent Corbet, eldest son of Sir Andrew Corbet, had recently been an officer in the Horse Guards—‘Blues.’

April 30th.—Crawled on deck. A fine breeze, the remains of a heavy sea, and raining a little.

May 1st.—Weather ditto. Books were now made up among the passengers as to our arrival at Boston.

May 3rd.—Arrived at Halifax on the fourteenth day from England. The bay somewhat resembles a Highland loch, being a long inlet with steep shores, the forest sweeping close down to the water, with here and there a small clearing, and the wooden cottage of a settler.

Landed and crawled about the town, while the steamer was taking in coals, &c.

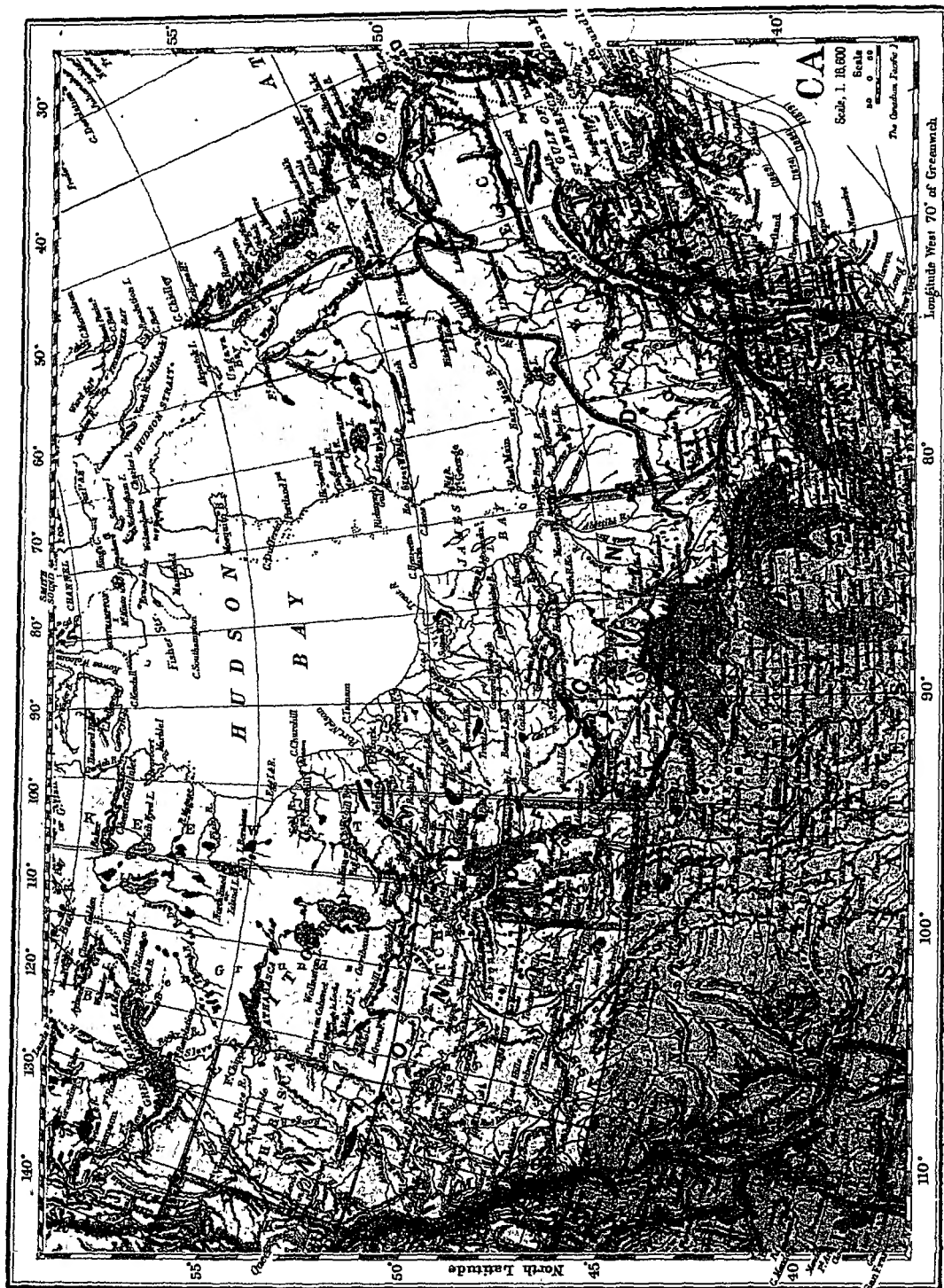
The town is composed of a wretched collection of wooden houses built on the side of a hill. People say otherwise, and that there are fine buildings; if so, I could not find them. Saw plenty of dried fish, plenty of ‘Sodgers,’ as the sailors call them, plenty of mongrel dogs, and one squaw.

May 6th.—Arrived in Boston harbour, and ran aground at the Custom House, within thirty yards of the shore.

Passed away the time in ‘sawthering’ the little ‘Blue Nose’ heiress, said to be worth 2000*l.* a year. A nice girl, and rather a bonnie one.

Landed at last; a great scrimmage at the gate.

After all was passed, then began the pleasures of a free country! A hundred porters seized you, and each dinned into your ears the incomparable superiority of his own mode of conveyance. I escaped at last from the Philistines,



without damage of self, or loss of traps, and sought refuge at the United States Hotel, close to the railroad.

The 'Boots' 'calculated he'd fix me right off,' and showed me my room, a little pigeon hole, 10 feet by 8, with green blinds, white walls, a bed, two chairs, a soap-dish, and a cream ewer, for furniture. Every single man's room is apparently of this description throughout America.

I sat down to unpack my portmanteau, whereupon Boots 'followed suit' on the remaining chair, and, placing his elbows on his knees, demanded the news from England, &c. He made sundry remarks on my clothes, baggage, &c., and then betook himself to Corbet, who was standing before his open dressing-case. Boots looked attentively first at the things therein displayed, and then at 'Crapaud,'* and thereupon observed, 'Well, stranger, I calculate you're one of them tooth-pulling dentist chaps, aren't you?'

May 7th.—McKenzie† in a great fidget about being late for the canoes at the 'Sault.'

Breakfasted at the *table d'hôte*, an eating match with the Yankees; fairly distanced.

All day on the railroad, long waggons with double seats on each side, and a gangway down the middle. Corbet

* 'Crapaud,' Corbet's nickname in the regiment. Possibly an allusion to the family name (originally Norman) and crest, being derived from 'Corbeau.'

† McKenzie, in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company, and had undertaken to make arrangements for the canoe journey, which was to commence at Sault St. Marie, south-eastern extremity of Lake Superior.

very busy with the heiress. Hot, dusty, and uncomfortable. The country barren, and chiefly covered with a second growth of wood. No fine timber. There is an air of desolation and discomfort about the whole thing.

Slept at Albany. Waiters all niggers, in clean jean suits, much the best I ever saw (*i.e.*, the nigger waiters, not the jackets).

May 8th.—Initiated into all the mysteries of corn-cobs, hominy, and mush, &c., a capital breakfast—as, indeed, all the Yankee meals are, if they would only give one time to eat them.

Twenty-four hours' railway, very slow and very shaky. Course up the valley of Mohawk. Little falls very pretty, all rock and water, like a Highland strath, which my next neighbour, a pig-driver from Oneida (who smelt of his profession, particularly when damp), called 'an almighty rough place!'

At Oneida, where the train stopped, saw my first squaws, selling little tinder-holders worked with beads; bought one from the prettiest of them.

The country here is almost one interminable forest, with here and there a small clearing or two.

May 9th.—Arrived in Buffalo this morning, tired, dusty, and uncomfortable.

We went to the wharf to secure a passage to Detroit, and were immediately seized upon by a Yankee, captain

of one of the floating houses they call steamers in these parts, who 'guessed that he meant to go ahead, right slick away, this evening, and would fix us, food and all, for three dollars a head!' Cheap enough, to be sure, for a six-and-thirty hours' passage!

Here we are within twenty miles of Niagara, and cannot get to see it! McKenzie will not hear of another day, so we must postpone the 'almighty fine water power' until our return.

Yankee captain has proved to be faithless. No steam up when we came down at seven, after a bad dinner at the hotel.

Got our 'notions' out of the boat, and embarked in the *Great Western*, which did look like going. Off at nine, a capital state-room to ourselves, opening on to the deck.

The steamers on the Lakes are all built three storeys high, so they look more like floating houses, than vessels fitted to make good weather of it, on these enormous inland seas.

May 10th.—On turning out for breakfast in the saloon this morning, I found my *vis-à-vis* at table to be an exceedingly dirty carpenter, and my neighbour on the right an equally dirty operative, with his family of children. However, they were very well behaved, and, beyond mephitic odours wafted across occasionally, when the door opened behind my opposite neighbour, they did not materially spoil my appetite for corn-cakes, &c.

Land not in sight on the starboard side. The coast we do see is low, and fringed with wood. Several schooners in sight. In the course of the day touched at Cleveland, which appeared to be a large place.

May 11th.—The next morning we found ourselves at Miami, a small town on a beautiful river, said to be very unhealthy from the marshes.

At two o'clock we entered the river leading to Detroit, and, passing the fort on the English side, reached Detroit, where we instantly embarked on another steamer, the *Champion*, then about to start for the Sault direct. She was full of miners going to the newly discovered mines on Lake Huron. We were over-loaded, and the boat rocked so fearfully that I expected to be upset before leaving the river. After a little she became steadier. We cleared Lake St. Clair before dark, and went to bed.

May 12th.—A thick fog, which lasted throughout the day, and prevented our seeing either shore.

May 13th.—Everything on board this abominable boat is filthy and bad in the extreme. The southern shore one continued forest. No house or settlement in sight throughout the day.

Arrived at Mackinaw about 7 p.m. A pretty village situated on an island, with a fort on a hill above the town. We landed, and took a stroll to the top.

Yankee soldiers are a rough lot. We visited the old

fort, which was taken by our troops in 1812. A fine view of the lake, with innumerable wooded islands, to be seen from this place. The town was full of Indians and half-breeds of the Chippewa tribe. Started at twelve.

May 14th.—Found myself this morning at the mines, landing miners, provisions, &c. Nothing but interminable forests all around, and a family of Indians on the shore, at a little distance from the miners' 'shanties.'

On starting we ran into the St. Mary's River. It is very beautiful. Innumerable islands, all, like the mainland, covered with forest, and the water with wild fowl of all kinds. Little bays and creeks in every direction.

Ran aground, alongside of another steamer, on the bar in Muddy Lake, and are there now, in spite of getting out all the cargo.

Got off by dint of hard work for all hands, lightening and kedging over the shoal; ran up the river, covered with the canoes—as the shore was with the lodges—of Saulteux Indians, engaged in catching white fish.

Arrived at the Sault about ten. Went to the hotel, McKenzie crossing with an Indian in a canoe to the fort.

May 15th.—We went over to the fort with Ballandane, the factor, having made the necessary purchases for our voyage. The fort is situated close to the falls, and is surrounded by an 'embarras' of burnt forest on three sides. Shot snipe in the afternoon, and exhausted the supply.

May 16th.—Dawdled about with Ballandane and Wilson, the Revenue officer. Went to visit the lodges of some Saulteux. Made the acquaintance of a very pretty young lady, the daughter of the lady of the lodge, in whose agreeable society I spent a good deal of my time during the following week, learning Chippewa, and other little Indian accomplishments.

LEAVING CIVILISED REGIONS, AND JOURNEY IN CANOES TO THE FORTS ON RED RIVER.

MAY 20TH TO JULY 13TH.

Thursday, May 20th.—The light canoe, with the picked men, arrived for Sir George Simpson, and went forward immediately to the 'Gros Cap,' for fear of desertion among the men—chiefly Indians and half-breeds, sturdy, weather-beaten old 'voyageurs,' without a 'mangeur de lard'* among them. McIntyre had at length scraped this wild lot together, and off they went, singing, paddling, and whooping like so many real savages, for their camp, eighteen miles up the lake.

Saturday, May 22nd.—I was awakened early by the arrival of the three loaded canoes, which had been stopped by the ice in Lake Nepessing, half-breeds, Indians, and raw boys from the settlements, all crowding round a large camp fire, at the head of the 'portage,'† eating their *galettes* and *rababou* out of a kettle, each one dipping his spoon in turns. Dorey, the old guide, who had engaged them, and who had

* 'Mangeur de lard,' evidently a term applied to one who was not experienced in, nor in condition for, the hardships of canoe travelling.

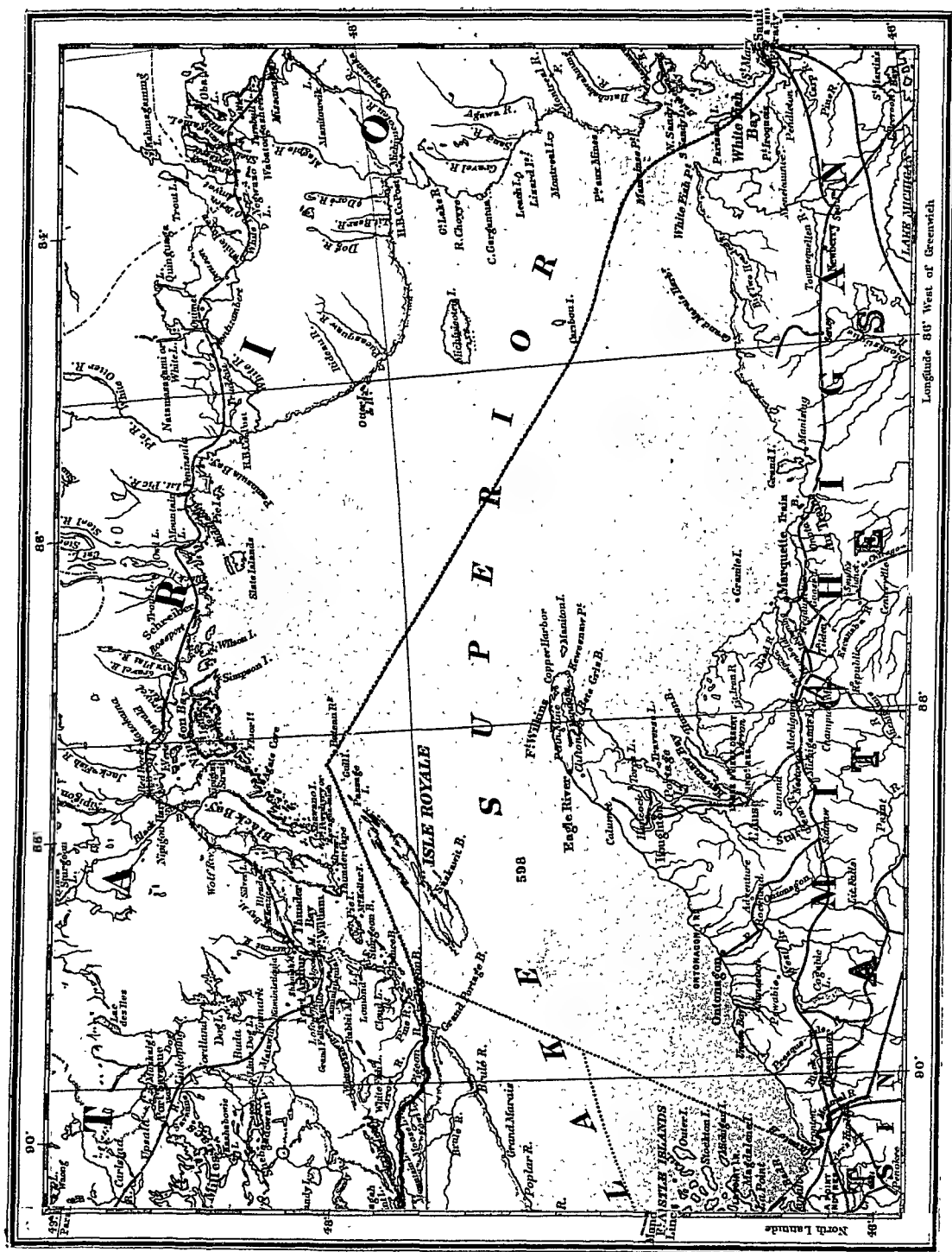
† 'Portage,' interval, or stretch of ground, over which canoes and baggage have to be carried by the men.

his forty dollars a man at stake, for each man delivered at the Pointe du Pain, in an agony to get off, lest any of them should take fright at the hardships before them, and bolt at this the last possible place. Ballandane started them, fitted out at last, for the Wilderness.

Bell, Ermytinger, and ourselves, accompanied by McLeod, who went up to the encampment to see us off, started for camp in a 'North Canoe,' after dinner, with all our little last treasures for the Wilderness, which we had either bought or acquired through the kindness of our really most kind friends, and arrived, on a cold, wintry night, at our first camp; pitched tents, lighted fires, oil-cloths spread, and settled down to a last glass of brandy-and-water, after which our friends took their departure, and we turned in, to be ready for an early start.

Sunday, May 23rd.—Roused by the call of 'Lève! lève!' at three in the morning, after a comfortless night enough. Very calm morning. Arrived at Gros Cap to breakfast. Found Sir George Simpson's canoe awaiting him there. Dined on an island at 2 p.m. It came on to blow hard. The canoes are wonderfully good sea boats. We sailed away until late, with a heavy sea on, and ran into a little creek, where the miners were nearly starved last winter. We had terrible accounts of their distress; many were not expected to live from scurvy and effects of hardship.

These mines are likely to turn out profitably, one of



Longitude 86° West of Greenwich

them yielding sixty-eight per cent—considered in proportion with those in Cornwall, which yield only sixteen. The camp is a fine wild sight—Iroquois and Canadians all busy felling timber, unloading canoes, pitching tents, and making up fires.

Monday, May 24th.—‘Lève! lève!’ again, before day began, and before I was dressed, down came the tent about my ears. Fine morning and fair wind. We sailed till breakfast, and had a good bathe; but very cold at my toilet, with a rock for my dressing-table, ‘the Father of Waters’* for my basin, and the forest for a window curtain.

We ran with a fair wind past several islands, making a long ‘traverse,’ and passing large masses of solid ice, along the rocky shore. Camped at sundown in a lovely little nook at the corner of a splendid bay. The camp was enclosed on three sides by a complete wall of a precipice of immense height, with pines springing out along the rugged face wherever a spot of soil was to be found. Climbed up, while supper was cooking, to visit the graves of some of the many poor voyageurs who lose their lives on this treacherous lake. A splendid view, the lake like glass, excepting where studded with wooded islands. A merry supper round our camp fire, and lots of wild prairie stories from ‘Old Rocky.’ A wet night.

Tuesday, May 25th.—A damp raw morning. Stood

* ‘Father of Waters,’ Lake Superior.

shivering round the remains of the fire till 'A l'eau!' was heard. Wind fair but very squally, and a heavyish sea. Wonderful boatmen these voyageurs; a pretty sight to see how they handle these frailest of crafts among the tremendous rollers of 'the Father of Waters,' in a gale of wind, especially when you are aboard of one, and know that, should the 'Butte's' paddle miss the water, and the canoe be consequently struck by the full force of the wave, she would be stove in to a certainty! Rain in torrents, and, in spite of oil-cloths, I soon found myself sitting in a small lake, which had formed on the oil-skin cover of my blankets. Crossed two fine bays, and ran into Mishomecoton* River, in a thunder plump; the banks very pretty—all forest, of course—but less of the eternal pine, and more hard wood. Arrived at the fort to breakfast with Mr. Swanston. Lots of trout, lake herrings, eggs, and bread; but no milk or fresh butter. The poor devils of men very miserable, wet, cold, and hungry, and without either fire or shelter. 'Old Rocky' foraged well—two geese, three ducks, and lots of fish. Off after breakfast. Wind against us, and a head sea. Made very little way, and halted at twelve, to feed the men and warm them at the fires. 'Old Rocky' soon manufactured a rare blaze out of his fire-bag, and we soon had two whole trees roaring away on it.

Off in an hour. Shore very rugged and precipitous, with

* Mishomecoton, probably same as in the maps, Michipicoten River.

a heavy surf on it. Paddled till dusk. Passed the mouth of the Dog River, where a family of Chippewas were encamped. These followed us to our camp in a small canoe through a heavy surf, and feasted like hungry wolves on the scraps of our supper. I shot a duck before dark.

Wednesday, May 26th.—Off before light, as 'le Gouverneur' was understood to be not very far behind. We were overtaken by him before breakfast, and ate together. He had fresh provisions—eggs and milk—which were a great treat, after 'tousjours ham and biscuit.'

'Gouverneur' went ahead in the light canoe.

Blowing very hard from the N.E., and the sea rising fast—the coast all rocks and precipices. It came on at last to blow fearfully, with heavy squalls. The sail was made fast, as usual. We took in four reefs, and reduced the sail to one half, the sea increasing every minute, so that we were in danger, whenever we had to cross from the lee of one island to another. At last the storm rose to such a height that we were glad to run into the first bay we could find. Our canoe was nearly swamped in running the narrows leading thereto by the heavy following seas, wherein we might all have met a watery grave. We camped in the rain, in a snug nook among the rocks. The fires were soon lighted. A jolly supper in our tent; then a chat round the fire, and to bed.

Thursday, May 27th.—Wind-bound. Started about 11,

wind still contrary. Governor ran into the Pic Fort about four ; and after crossing the bay we dined on a rock.

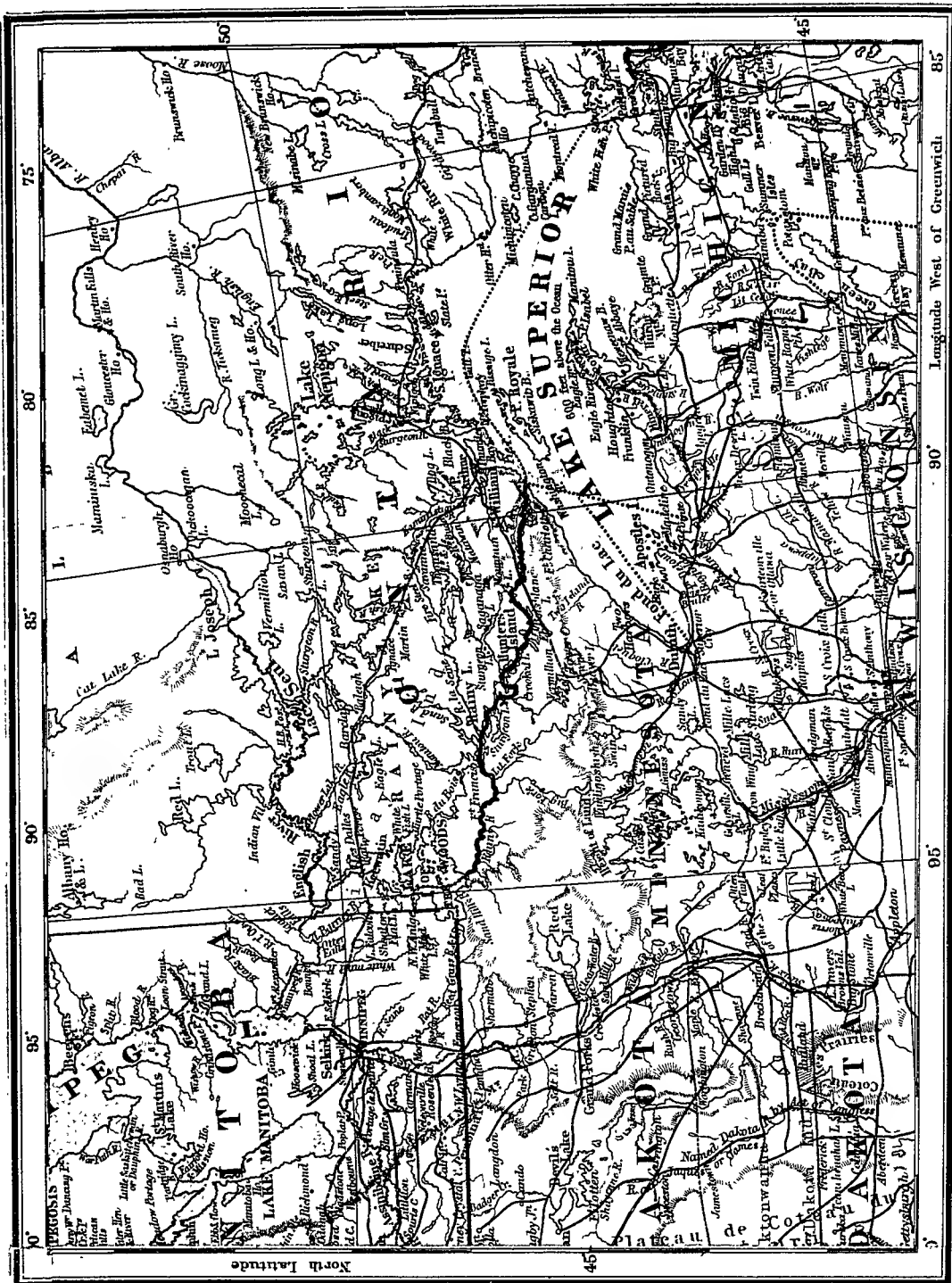
Off again, made a long 'traverse,' and camped about twelve on a rocky point. McLeod came to our camp from the Governor's, and got so 'boozy' that he would not start in the morning.

Friday, May 28th.—Off at 3 a.m. Lovely day. A swim in the lake before breakfast. Sir George in a great state of mind at McLeod's defalcation, as he was to have accompanied Sir George to the mines, of which McLeod is a shareholder.

We had some fresh meat, having picked up half a calf and some eggs at the Pic. A long day's work, coasting an island, about the size of the Isle of Wight, and about the same distance from the mainland. A late camp on the island, nearly setting the trees on fire, which, as we were camped among the trees at the water's edge, might have been awkward.

Saturday, May 29th.—Off at 4 a.m., hoping to reach Fort William late in the evening. A lovely day, and a very bonnie journey among thousands of wooded islands, through the channels of which we twisted about throughout the day. Screwed the men up with the 'filet,'* and reached the long traverse off Cap de Tonnerre about

* 'Filet,' dram of spirits.



North Latitude

Longitude West of Greenwich

90°

95°

45°

50°

sunset. Served out the grog again, and started across the bay in the dark.

This is the place where many have suffered great privations, as the traverse is a long one, and very dangerous from the heavy sea that runs there; consequently canoes are apt to be wind-bound here when most short of provisions.

However, we passed over very merrily, the crews of the three canoes (thanks to the file) being very musically inclined, and singing 'Belle Rose' and 'La Noisette' in chorus, the whole way—

'Eh, qui est la belle Rose,
C'est le fils de l'héritant
Belle Rose—Rose et Blanc,'—

to Fort William, where we camped outside the stockade at one in the morning.

Lot of fresh fish, eggs, butter and milk. I nearly made myself sick with luxuries, and turned in about 4 a.m.

Sunday, May 30th.—Breakfasted in the fort. Numbers of Chippewas encamped on the opposite side of the river, having brought in the results of their winter's hunting. A chief came over, an ill-looking rascal, with a long coat and leggings of bright scarlet, attended by a suite of tag-rag and bobtail, in all the colours of the rainbow. After breakfast, embarked in three north canoes, and left the loaded brigade to follow, with McKenzie and 'Old Rocky,'

the latter on his way back to Oregon. A very tough afternoon's work up a pretty little river—all poleing work and towing, after the first few hours. Heat very oppressive. Camped at sundown.

Monday, May 31st.—‘Lève! lève!’ very early, and I slept in the canoe as far as the Mountain Portage. Four or five miles carrying of heavy bales and luggage for the poor devils, during which we scrambled to the water's edge, to see the Falls of the Kamanistoquea—the finest in America after Niagara, 120 feet high, and the body of water as large as Esk in flood.

Passed a camp of Indians, staying there for the fishing. ‘Bonjour’ and a shake of hands with the whole of them in succession. Then to breakfast at the end of the portage.

A very heavy day's work for the men. Twelve or thirteen portages, some short, some long. Rapids to ascend, in some of which, the water being heavy, we were in considerable difficulty—in one especially where old Bernard's pole broke, followed by two or three of the men's in succession. The canoe broached to, and was within an ace of going over; luckily, the plucky old dog stopped her with the steering-paddle, and at it again, as if nothing had happened. We towed up and got well over; but stuck in the next, and were nearly squashed among the rocks in the narrow channel. The river very beautiful, and the evening lovely! a succession of wee lakes, formed by small streams,

led us to the foot of the 'Portage du Chien,' and a *chien de portage* it was for the poor worn-out devils, who had been labouring up all day. A high hill divided the river from the Lac du Chien. The canoes were all damaged with sharp rocks, and had to be fresh gummed that night ; and the path over the hill, about two and half miles, was much encumbered with embarras. We camped very late, on a little green at the edge of the lake, a most lovely spot. I had a swim and went to bed.

Tuesday, June 1st.—A late start. A three hours' paddle to the end of the lake, and into an infernal, sluggish, muddy river ; flat, swampy jungle on each side, and the heat scorching.

Towards evening, the route lay through a most unwholesome looking swamp, twisting through innumerable islands, up little channels not wide enough for two canoes abreast, men dead beat, and no singing. Camped at sundown at the foot of a portage, cold and heavy mist from the swamp, the Major's canoe missing, Sir George evidently uneasy, and no wonder ! as below, there was no landing in the swamp, and they had nothing to eat. They arrived about an hour after dark, and were dead beat, bleeding at the nose, and the Major in a devil of a rage.

Supper rather unpleasant, the two higher powers being, the one sulky, the other uncomfortable.

Wednesday, June 2nd.—Off before daybreak. Three

long portages over the 'Prairie,' four miles, and breakfasted at the other end close to a little lake in a swamp. Corbet had good shooting—several swamp partridges and hens.

The 'Milieu' on the other side of the little lake, a short one, through a swamp, two miles more of a little lake, and then the 'Savanne,' very long and very swampy. Day hot, but overcast, and the shores of the lake flat and ugly. Dined at the other end of last portage. Men terribly exhausted. The Iroquois who carried the canoes looking like fiends, their shirts off, their skins like heated copper, and their long black hair all loose, with their wild black eyes glowing like hot coals. Each man jumped into the river as soon as the canoes were by, and after a flounder or two, to cool themselves, took the back track for another load, just as fresh as at starting.

The poor 'mangeurs de lard' terribly cooked! Loads were left, and thrashings administered by the old hands, in some cases, to make them carry through. Cruel work! Ten or twelve miles in a day with 180 pounds to carry.

After dinner, and an unsuccessful fish, started down the 'Rivière d'Embarras,' and plenty of *embarras* we found. Every two or three hundred yards we had to axe our way through the timber that choked up the little stream. We camped in a swamp covered with brushwood, and nearly burnt ourselves out by setting the brush on fire. The

Gouverneur getting anxious as to our provisions holding out, as we have only twelve days' rations, and at the rate we go, weak-handed as we are, we have quite as many days to travel ; and should we be wind-bound, or any accident happen in shooting the rapids or otherwise, all hands must starve !

Thursday, June 3rd.—Terribly cold, nearly frozen out of the tent. Off early down the river and into the Lake of the Thousand Islands. We were to breakfast on one of them, and on creeping out from under the oil-cloth, found it snowing heavily in showers, and bitter cold. Had a wash in the lake, in spite of the weather, and found breakfast ready in a cosy little nook of pine trees, with a blazing fire in front.

The lake very bonnie. The islands are all hilly, and the variety of timber with which they are covered, and which is just bursting into leaf, has a good effect from the contrast of colours.

There are lots of remains of Indian lodges in most of the little creeks ; but we have not seen a human being since we left the camp at the mountain portage. Indeed no white men but those who accompany the Hudson's Bay Company canoes on the out-trip, and return in the fall, have ever trodden these forests.

Three portages during the day. Our journey lay through some of the most beautiful forest scenery that

can be conceived. A succession of lakes, with the eternal forest down to the water's edge on all sides, some of the shores hilly, some flat, and a thousand creeks, bays, nooks, and islands on every side.

Marked the track of a large cariboo, fresh up the portage, and longed for a shy at him with old 'Kill-deer';* also passed an Indian winter camp with five bears' skulls attached to the lodge poles. Shot the rapids at nightfall and nearly swamped the canoe. Encamped at a long portage after dark. I was much edified by old Batiste the 'Butte's' skill at the rapid. We came down it at railway speed, through lots of rocks and snags, among which he twisted the canoe with wonderful skill, never turning his head, and seeming to steer by instinct. Had we touched one we should have gone to smithereens in a second.

Friday, June 4th.—Off at daybreak. Performed our ablutions in the little tarn at the end of the portage, while breakfast was being cooked. Corbet shot one brace of swamp partridges, one brace of common partridges, and a hare on the road.

Passed several pretty lakes during the day, winding our way through small lakes and streams, with a great many short portages. We shot some rapids towards

* 'Kill-deer,' his double-barrelled rifle, of course in those days muzzle-loading.

evening, and emerged into a fine broad stream*, as wide as the Thames at Richmond, fringed with the eternal forest, just now breaking into leaf. The reaches of the river very fine—a lovely calm evening—nothing to be heard but the song of our men, with a running accompaniment of frogs and crickets from the shore.

Made a portage at dusk, and found Sir George and the Major wet to the skin, having shipped much water at the last 'chute,' a very great fall, down which we came without taking in a drop; old Batiste jumping up in the canoe, selecting his place and darting in without hesitation among the rocks and breakers, through which we shot with the speed of lightning for a couple of hundred yards, the old fellow as cool all the time as if eating his dinner.

Sir George assured us it was only a short ten minutes to the camping-ground; it proved to be an hour and a half. Landed in the dark, found a couple of trees on the fire and were soon warm and comfortable.

Saturday, June 5th.—'Lève! lève!' at daylight. Slept to the first portage. Still in the River Mécan. Breakfasted on Corbet's and my partridges. Some Indians came to the scene of embarkation, to have a look at us—two men, a boy, and a woman. The men were fine active-looking fellows, each with no clothing, excepting a waist-cloth

* River Mécan.

and blanket. The woman, a rather red lady, was naked to the waist, and whether shy or otherwise, did not show much, but sat in the canoe. The boy was naked, excepting a shirt of rabbit-skins, and looked starved and wretched, his legs being no thicker than a man's arm. We are now coming to the Indians' sturgeon-fishing water, and may expect to see numbers of this wild tribe.

At the next portage we passed a few lodges, on the other side of the deep bay in the river. On seeing us there was a yell immediately, and several savages, rushing to the water, paddled across full tilt towards us. 'Bonjour,' gabbled as fast as possible for five minutes, was the extent of their powers of conversation; but they made us understand that they had sturgeon to sell. One swell took a great fancy to me because I got into his canoe and paddled a little way. He offered to take me down the rapid, but I declined.

Towards evening we passed a large Saulteux village encamped there for sturgeon, and it was a curious sight, situated on a cleared spot at a beautiful bend of the river. I took their bark lodges at first for a fort, but was soon undeceived, as, the moment the canoe song was heard, a hundred whooping savages rushed to their canoes, and were dashing round us in all directions, like so many dolphins. Very fine, clean-made fellows, naked as Adam, and their faces painted all the colours of the rainbow. As I sat up in the canoe, to look at the sight, I had to do all the hand-

shaking of the party, which was not a remarkably agreeable task.

Another portage, a dinner of sturgeon (right nasty), poled through several little stagnant swampy creeks, full of wild rice and frogs, and emerged into Lac la Pluie, about forty miles long, and ten or twelve broad. The poor men dead beat, several vomiting, many bleeding at the nose. Camped on the mainland at sundown. A lovely calm night.

Sunday, June 6th.—‘Lève!’ before daybreak. Slept the whole way to the fort at the foot of the lake, or rather in the river, and was awakened by whoops and a tremendous fusillade. A large camp of Saulteux at the fort, fishing in the falls. Went to the rocks to bathe, and a select party of Indians watched my toilet with great interest. The washing my teeth puzzled them amazingly, and they were much delighted with my little looking-glass. ‘The ladies looked on at a distance. One fellow appeared anxious to try my hairbrush, and was rather vexed at my being so unreasonable as to object to the offer. A capital breakfast, lots of milk and white fish.

There was a dog feast going on in the village, which I looked in upon. They had three dead dogs lying at the foot of three posts. The whole village, men and women, sat round in a circle, the space being fenced in with withies, while the Medicine-men went through their ceremonies, dancing round

the dogs, and beating drums and rattles. Two braves were painted to the eyes, and sat smoking with all gravity. I was asked by an old boy with a necklace of bears' claws to join the circle, but declined, as *cotelettes de chien au naturel* were not to my taste, and if I had sat down, eat I must.

I took a look at the lodges, which were very dirty, full of puppies, and some dried sturgeon. Saw one or two nice plump little lassies, as smart as beads and paint could make them, but much in want of soap and water. The woman living with the master of the fort must have been very beautiful—a half-bred Saulteux and Canadian.

We left the fort at about 11 a.m., and ran down the Lac de Pluie river, a fine broad stream, with rich land on either shore. It is the 'march' between British and American lands, and the forest on both banks consists of birch and hard wood instead of the eternal pine forests, which we have hitherto passed through.

We passed several camps of Indians through the day. One especially, very prettily situated at a place where the woods recede from the river, leaving the high green banks bare of timber for some distance, and as green as the fresh grass and herbage could make them. The Indians were fishing sturgeon in the rapid, through which we shot, and passed too quickly for any of them to come off to us. The site of the Indian camp last passed was famous among the tribe as being sacred to the 'Manitou,' or god, covered with tombs, or

cairns, apparently raised in the same manner as those in the Highlands, and, like them, said to be the graves of the great warriors of former days.

Camped at sundown on the sandy shore. A track of a large moose on the water side, quite fresh. Mosquitoes and frogs in abundance. Night very mild.

Monday, June 7th.—‘Lève!’ as usual, at two in the morning. The moon rose, looking watery. Morning warm and close. Was awakened in the canoe by the rain; sky as black as ink, raining heavily. Canoe travelling not by any means pleasant in wet weather. Landed for breakfast at nine. Made a shelter out of the poles of an old Indian lodge and a piece of oil-cloth.

On nearing the mouth of the river the channel widened to the width of the Thames at Greenwich. Banks marshy and covered with reeds, ducks in swarms, longed for a day among them; blowing a whole gale with heavy rain. Could not make the traverse at the mouth of the river to the shores of the Lake of the Woods.

Encamped at 2 p.m. on the wooded end of a sand bar in the bay. Everything soaked through. I went to shoot among the sand hills, lost two ducks, and came into the camp wet to the skin. It rained and blew all the evening. A feast in Sir George’s tent—rice-pudding and cream, and two glasses of wine. Hoped for wind next morning to get a little sleep, and things dried.

Tuesday, June 8th.—Hazy weather. Off at six. Very cold, things being all wet. Met a Saulteux on the traverse with his wife and children in a small canoe. He had horns on his head, and looked like a devil on the stage. Breakfast at nine. A good wash in the lake. Rather cold from wet clothes. Lighted a large fire, and had half-an-hour to roast myself while the fish was cooking. Off at half-past ten for the Dalles—Lake of the Woods—a large piece of water, muddy, and with fewer large islands than most of the others. The day gloomy, but no rain. Lake about sixty miles long. Made a good day's journey, and camped at sundown in a snug little bay. Took the gun and scrambled along the rocks, missed a mallard most scandalously. Had a bathe before supper. Night warm and camp very cosy.

Wednesday, June 9th.—Started about the usual time—an hour or two before daybreak. The lake much of the same character as the previous ones, but much longer than it appears on the map. Arrived at the portage at the entrance of the river Winnipeg (200 miles long) at about eight, and breakfasted at the fort, situated on a bay of the river,—a house and two stores, a miserable looking place. The man in charge—a McKenzie of course—called by courtesy the Major, he having held a lieutenant's commission in the army, during the Peninsula War, and having afterwards joined the Hudson's Bay Company, had married a half-breed, and had been thirty years in the service. He appeared very proud of

his dogs and cattle, talked a great deal about Corunna, and gave us a capital breakfast, in which cream and white fish predominated, or rather formed the whole. His daughters were very pretty. I had a long chat with one of them in the dairy; a most unsophisticated little lady, who told me she never saw a white person excepting twice a year when the brigades pass and return. She united the best qualities of the two races—a bright English colour mantling through the olive skin, and the white regular teeth, coal-black hair, and eyes of an Indian, and her figure as straight and lithe as a willow wand.

The river—if river it can be called, for it has scarcely any current, and forms a succession of large pools dotted with islands (at least, as far as we have been down it, while I am writing, 2 p.m.)—resembles a long narrow lake, the scenery very similar to the lakes we have previously passed through. Trees, trees, trees for everlasting! I shall hate the sight of a wood for the future.

Day hot. Men tired. Self sleepy. Camped at night on a bare rock. A lovely evening, and a very pretty camp, above the—now splendid—river, overlooking a magnificent stretch of water, as wide as the Thames at Gravesend, clothed on each bank with hard wood forest, now in full leaf, and the wild forest trees all in bloom.

Thursday, June 10th.—This day has been a very tedious one to the men, and would have been very alarming to an

elderly gentleman troubled with nerves. I, fortunately, have none ; but I could feel even Corbet wince as we shot some of the rapids, or whirled up to the edge of a steep slippery rock on the very verge of a magnificent fall, when it appeared, and I once thought was, rather doubtful whether we were forced over or not ! It proved that I was not wrong, as one or two canoes had been lost on the Chute de Jocko.*

The character of the river is still sluggish, excepting where, here and there, it takes it into its head to plunge down all in a mass, some forty or fifty feet more or less abruptly. Sometimes five or six of these rapids, or chutes, occur in succession, with intervals of 600 or 700 yards, after which all is calm again for miles. This day I had, more than ever, reason to admire old Batiste's and Jock's extraordinary skill among the falls. Sometimes we would dash up to the very edge of the chute, and when you thought that over you must go, you were whirled into a little eddy just at the corner, the men in the water, luggage landed, canoe out, and in ten minutes you were off again at the other end. At other times the chute was to be run. Batiste jumped up on the gunwale, chose his place, and at it we went like a horse at a fence. The roar became louder every moment, you see waves, rocks, and foam all round you for a few seconds, while you whirl through it, it appears a toss up if you are to be swamped or dashed to pieces, and then you find yourself floating quietly at the bottom, and

* Chute de Jocko, in the modern maps Falls of Jacquet.

wonder how in the world you got there! Seventy miles done to-day, thirty-six before breakfast in the smooth water.

Friday, June 11th.—Camped last night below the last chute. Had a visit at supper from seven Indians, whom I found sitting in a row outside the Gouverneur's tent, smoking with all gravity. They were much amused at my walking barefoot over the sharp rocks to the camp. Fine-looking fellows. Lots of sturgeon for supper, bought for two or three plugs of tobacco.

Arrived this day at Fort Alexander at the mouth of the river, after two or three short portages. The place, like the other forts, consists of one cottage and three or four stores enclosed by a square of stockades. Lots of Indians and 'Métifs'* hanging about. Bought a pair of mocassins of a very pretty young lady.

We parted from one of the canoes here, her destination being Norway House direct, with the Gouverneur's secretary in command. 'Abraham' went with them, much to his disgust and horror, which I increased considerably by telling him that the Indians there were all cannibals, and that it was a curious fact, recently ascertained, that they much preferred niggers to white men, the flesh of which former they would do anything to obtain. I added that, owing to the two last negroes having been abstracted and eaten, he was sent there to replace them; but every one was warned not to tell him, lest

* 'Métifs,' half-bred Indian and white race.

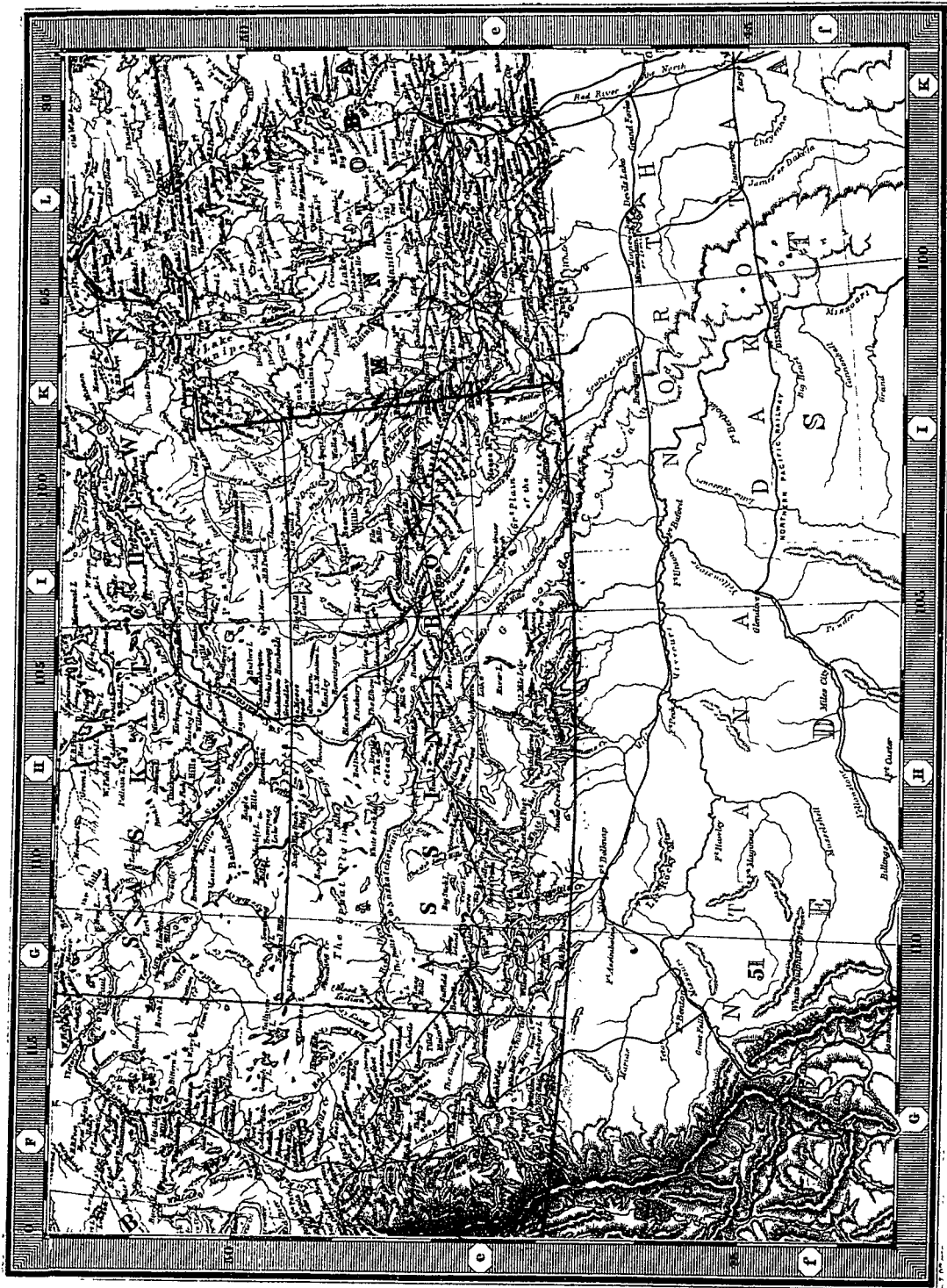
it should in any way affect his spirits, and I only ventured to do so as a friendly caution. The poor devil was in a great quandary!

Found a sand bar running half-way across Lake Winnipeg, had to make a portage across, and remained on the other side.

Saturday, June 12th.—Made the long traverse in the dark across this most dangerous of the inland lakes, and landed for breakfast close to the mouth of the Red River. A wet day. The shores flat and swampy, with scrubby timber on each side. Arrived at the Lower Fort* just before the officers' mess, and was introduced to as good a set of fellows as ever I came among. The hunters had already started for the plains, and all the officers that could get away were to follow them on Monday.

Sunday, June 13th.—Went on to the Upper Fort with Griffiths, nineteen and a half miles further up, with a 'buffalo-runner' between the shafts, our vehicle a coalscuttle on wheels, and our road an open prairie—the first I had seen—bounded on the one side by the Red River about a mile distant, on the other by the Rocky Mountains about 700 miles off. The settlers' houses are few and far between. Six or seven miles of timber and open prairie intervene now and then before you see the log and mud hut of a half-breed. At least, at the upper end, *i.e.*, that

* Lower Fort—Fort Garry. The Red River Forts were situated where the town of Winnipeg now stands. Fort Garry still marked on some maps.



on the Assiniboine before it 'forks' with the Red River, which part is almost entirely colonised by Métifs, under the control of old Grant, the half-breed, 'the Warden of the plains.'

Monday, June 14th.—Corbet off to the buffalo with five of the officers. Too ill to go myself, so determined to await Harriott's return from Norway House, and accompany him to Fort Edmondton on the Saskatchewan, Sir George Simpson having kindly arranged that he should come back to accompany me, I to be in readiness by July 20th at latest. Spent the interval between June 14th and July 13th in getting well under old Robertson, in the society of Françoise Laronde—a bonnie, bonnie lassie, though a Cree half-breed—and, for a variety, in making a trip over to Manitoba Lake, called sixty miles from Red River, but I found it two days' good journey through the plains, with no good water, the shoal lake, where we camped the first night, being saltish. The gun kept us in fresh provisions, and we lived well, having eggs, salt butter, biscuit, and shrub *à discrétion*. My 'tail' consisted of George,* McKay, the half-breed—a very smart young fellow, and the handsomest withal that I ever saw—three horses, a cart, and a dog.

* George Reid, English servant, who at this time had been with Frederick Graham about eight years, and remained in his service altogether eleven or twelve years. A particularly intelligent, clever, and active man.

We remained out a week. Lots of ducks on the swamps at Manitoba, ditto of mosquitoes and 'bull-dogs.' Weather very wet, yet contrived between the storms to shoot enough ducks, teal, and bitterns to feed my camp and a family of Saulteux encamped beside us ; but it was dirty work, up to one's middle in a swamp the whole time, at best two miles in width, the stench of which was abominable and the insects intolerable, with the chance of going over head every moment. We returned by the Assiniboine track for the sake of water. Terrible thunder-storms every night, and a leaky tent.

Found Harriott at Red River on my return, anxious to be off. The buffalo-hunters returned two days after my arrival, not at all pleased with their 'out.' No provisions, the old bulls very tough, and the restraint too great, not being allowed to run buffalo while the meat previously killed was being dried, for fear of driving away the bands, besides being in constant fear of the Sioux, who were lurking on the outskirts of the party watching for a stray scalp.

START FROM RED RIVER FORT AND FURTHER
PROGRESS TO LAC LA PLUME.

JULY 13TH TO 26TH.

Tuesday, July 13th.—Started with Harriott, his daughter, six carts, seven men, two boys, George, and thirty-six horses, for Beaver Creek at one p.m., escorted by old Prudent, his wife and family, and also by several of the officers, as far as that detestable Sturgeon Creek where I passed such a wretched night on my way back from Manitoba. ‘Loosed up’ there, and Harriott gave a parting picnic to the party. Started in an hour, amidst many kind wishes, crossed that never-ending White Horse plain, and camped at old Grant’s. Had tea at the house, tried to make small talk to Madame—no go—she only speaking Cree. Grant came to our camp afterwards and got drunk, of course. Got rid of him, made old McDougall smoke out the mosquitoes, and went to bed.

Wednesday, July 14th.—‘Lève ! lève !’ at daybreak. Fourteen miles to Monsieur Belcour’s at the Indian settlement. Heard that his housekeeper was remarkably pretty. Called to see. Found her something like old Jimmy Wilson* in

* Jimmy Wilson, an old gamekeeper at Netherby, by no means handsome.

petticoats, only a trifle younger. Cantered after the party, and found them at breakfast at the 'Marais de Cayeux,' where the hay is mostly made for the settlement. A very sultry day.

Country flat, plains interspersed with scrubby woods and swamps, excepting immediately along the river banks where the timber that has not been destroyed by fire, is moderately large. Amused myself by trying all the hacks in the band, with the exception of my own horse and Lambert, our two 'buffalo runners.' Little Basil caught every one for me that I pointed out, with the 'cabrèche' (a long noose of smoked buffalo line), which he threw with great skill. The little imp would dash off at speed, his long hair floating over his back, and his noose swinging round his head, catch a wild horse, sometimes after a good chase, and lug the poor devil up to me, half throttled, saying with an air of triumph, 'Ah ! crapaud—tu es farouche ! mais je suis ton maître.' The boy (he is but fourteen) is as fine a horseman as I ever saw, as indeed all the half-breeds are, and looks quite a little warrior, with his embroidered shot-bag and horn sling, and his long 'fusil' across his saddle-bow. I delight in that boy !

We bade farewell to the Assiniboine river for some hundred miles, had a parting swim, and started over a wide plain, fifteen miles at least to the nearest water.

On, on, on, hour after hour, the sun frying out our

brains, and the horses getting more and more distressed, and still not even a swamp where we could manage to squeeze out a drop of water! This was a bore! In went the spurs and down the track at a hand gallop, a toss up whether I or my horse failed first. At last I saw some willows over the plain. Now for a drink! No, it was a dry swamp. On again, more willows, the creek at last! My horse's nose and mine were in it at the same time, and a devil of a suck we took! Off saddle, on with the hobbles, and into the nice cool creek. By the time my dip was over the carts arrived, and mine upset at the ford, everything wet. Pleasant! Camped, and to bed. Mosquitoes detestable. Spent the night squibbing charges of powder, till I nearly choked poor old McDougall and made the tent as black as my hat.

Thursday, July 15th.—A long march yesterday. Horses pretty well cooked. Took a ride in the cart. The green buffalo hide over it smelt abominably. The jolting among the badger holes not bearable. Won't try that again! The saddle for me! Woods, woods, nothing but nasty scrubby poplar, brush, and June bushes, without any berries on them. Breakfasted at a swamp, water very bad, smelling bad, and full of insects; strained it through my handkerchief before we made the tea. Country the same till dinner-time; all short brushwood about the height of a man on horseback, and full of swamps. Shot two prairie hens. Dinner, and a

good wash at a nice cool little creek. Country more undulating and pretty, but still covered with brushwood. Lots of wolves' tracks in the soft earth. An hour further on we came to a bad creek. The temporary bridge broke with the carts, and several horses stuck among the wreck. We got them out with some difficulty. Then, up the hill on the other side, where I clapped my horse on as 'leader' to my own cart with a cabrèche for traces, and walked up it with my load easily, while the rest of the party were 'sacre'-ing at the bottom. Over another creek of a similar description and camped.

Harriott saw two wild horses. They went off into the woods. Some men were sent after them, but soon lost all traces. The flies were very bad, therefore, if we could have discovered the whereabouts of the horses by lighting a fire to windward, they would have instinctively come to it, and could then have been caught with ease.

Friday, July 16th.—Mosquitoes very bad last night. Smoking them out with green bushes and grass was the only way to get a moment's rest, the alternative being—to suffocate or be devoured.

The country undulating, though still covered with scrub, and a sandy soil instead of swamps opened out at last into a rolling prairie. I skirted away after a chance at a cabri, and several times lost myself for the moment among the innumerable little miniature mountains, until, on topping

one higher than the rest, I could see the string of carts and band of horses winding along through the hillocks, perhaps in quite an opposite direction to what I had supposed. We passed the trail of the half-breeds on their way to the plains, and nearly mistook it for our own road. I had been off to get a rifle shot at two long-legged cranes, and on coming out of the bush I found Harriott 'making casts,' like a hound, to find the track. At length a half-breed discovered it, and off we went to breakfast on the other side of a pretty creek, with high sloping green banks.

Looked all day for cabris and bears, but found nothing. Camped on the plain close to a small lake of bad water, with a large swamp round it.

Took Basil with me to initiate him into the mysteries of stalking ducks while the camp was pitching. Caught two young eagles, which the men ate, and said were very good.

Saturday, July 17th.—Passed many salt lakes, but found very little drinkable water. These lakes have the taste of a dose of Epsom salts, and the same effect; but the horses can drink them, though none of the men could.

We camped at Eagle Tail Creek, a very pretty river, with beautiful green banks, sloping down to a lovely vale on each side, studded with clusters of poplar bushes doing duty for timber; but the effect very good from the western summit. I thought many a nobleman at home would be glad of such a park for his house.

Monday, July 19th.—Night cool and no mosquitoes. Arrived in the vale of the Assiniboine once more, about twelve o'clock. A very bad ford to cross, and the wolves had eaten all the caulking out of the bateau. I rattled up one of the said gentlemen, but was not mounted to catch him. Had I been on 'Charley,' the result might have been very different. As it was he scorned me, and retired among the hills. Shot several ducks before arriving at the ford, and two or three prairie hens. Made a portage of my own goods on horseback. Water very deep, and horse all but swimming. Arrived at Beaver Creek Fort about 4 p.m.

Tuesday, July 20th.—We remained at Beaver Creek all day. The fort is of the same description as all the Hudson's Bay Company's forts, a house for the fort-keeper, with stores and servants' houses on each side, the whole enclosed by a high palisade, and double gates with the Indian house between the latter, so that only a certain number may be admitted at a time. No beds, no windows (a scraped piece of buffalo hide supplying the place of the former), and no crockery whatever, with very little to eat, and that of the worst and dirtiest description; and you have a good notion of a prairie fort in time of scarcity. Here they had nothing but a few pieces of an old scabbed bull, that a hunter had killed two days before, very tough, and rank as a rutting stag. The whole place was full of starving sleigh-dogs, great wolf-like

looking brutes, and full also of Indian squaws and children, the men having gone to war on the Blackfeet, towards the mountains.

Here, also, I saw the two first specimens of the real wild plain Indians, a boy and a man of the Assiniboinés, a branch of the great Sioux nation, very different looking animals from the filthy Crees and Saulteux I had hitherto seen. Fine, clean, active-looking fellows, with perfect Roman-looking countenances; every article of their clothing-leather beautifully dressed, and their robes gracefully put on, altogether very dignified, but wild as wild deer. The boy was the best arrow shot I had yet seen. I put up a glove at fifty yards, and he hit it twice with six arrows.

Wednesday, July 21st.—Off after breakfast, crossed the River Qu'Appelle, and camped on the other side. The ford was bad, and Harriott's cart got a complete soaking. I went out while the camp was pitching, and shot several ducks. The country is becoming very beautiful, woods and undulating plains on every side.

From this to Lac la Plume,* with the exception of a scarcity of fresh, and an abundance of salt water, our route was the same as the first day from Beaver Creek, and without any adventure whatever.

Monday, July 26th.—Started from a camp in the middle of an enormous plain, and arrived at the shore of Lac la Plume

* Probably Lac la Plume, same as in the maps, Great Quill Lake.

to breakfast. The said lake is so called from the quantity of quills collected there by the Indians in the moulting season, and traded for the English market at the Hudson's Bay Company's forts. Lots of cabris seen, but much too bashful to approach in the bare plain. I shot a large crane with the rifle, which showed fight when 'The Spirit of the Day'* and I approached to seize it; but I put in 'cut No. 2' with the butt of my whip, as he 'gave point' at my eye, and 'settled his hash.' The Spirit of the Day ate the bird for breakfast, and swore it was 'as good as buffalo.'

* The Spirit of the Day,' name of an Indian.

SPORT WITH BUFFALO WHILE JOURNEYING TO FORT EDMONDTON AND ARRIVAL THERE.

JULY 26TH TO AUGUST 11TH.

Monday, July 26th (continued).—Looked for game all day, but found nothing but wolves and shy cabris, until at evening, as I was skirting away, I saw a commotion among the line of carts, and riding up to ascertain the cause of excitement, found that a band of buffalo were in sight, and sure enough, straight ahead, in the centre of a level plain, bounded by high woods, there was a mass of black moving lumps, dotting the surface of the green for miles on each side.

Harriott gave orders to move on to the brook (for we were hard up for water), and camp, while we prepared to 'run' while the light lasted. I got on Charley's back with a brace of pistols, Harriott on Lambert, George, Powyac, and the Spirit of the Day bringing up the rear. Off we set at a slow trot, the ground full of badger holes. I began to feel that I *was* upon a horse, active as a cat, and strong as a house! Charley raked away, snatching at his bit like a little tiger, as the pace became better. First we started two or three old lolloping bulls from a swamp, who rattled away towards the herd at their best pace. I took my place a little behind Harriott,

to see how he would commence operations, and take a lesson. As we approached nearer the herd the pace became better, and when within a hundred yards we rattled into the herd, or rather into a cloud of dust from which issued hoarse roarings on every side, for nothing could be seen till, dashing through, I found Harriott pitching both barrels into a fat cow, and saw no more, as I was instantly in the middle of the band, looking out one for myself, found her, and at it we went, she bustling along best pace, and I after her. At last I pitched a ball into her quarter, and missed the second shot, Charley pulling like the devil. At her again, up went the tail and she charged in her turn, a pull at Charley, till she was within three yards, when I pitched a ball into her head. She stopped. 'Now, my lady, I shall finish you at my leisure!' Loaded, and rode up as she walked slowly away. Up went the tail and at me again, twenty miles an hour, another ball in her nose, and off she went as well apparently as ever. At last after innumerable running fights and several more balls planted, I had to pull up, with Charley dead beat, and could have cried with vexation, as I saw my first cow growing beautifully less as she increased the distance between us. *Mem.*—Discard pistols for the future! The half-breeds were right when they told me pistols would not do.

Began to think where I was! All the woods on the verge looked the same. I had no compass, and no idea which way I had run; but must have gone some six or seven miles. At



last I saw a band of buffalo moving off, and took their back track, knowing they must have come from the party. Was right. Found George and Powyac in mortal combat with a fine old bull which they had managed to hustle. Fancy a beast twice the size of a Smithfield ox, all shaggy as a lion over the forequarters, his eyes shining like coals of fire, and the blood spouting from his nose and flanks, charging furiously at everything within his reach, tail up and head down, and you see a wounded bull at bay!

Charley was fresh again, so I dashed at him, and like lightning he turned on me, tail on end. A gentle pull at my bonnie bay to let him near enough, and 'thud' went a ball against his head—but no effect! The good-for-nothing pistol-shot was as weak as a pea-shooter, and a good rifle could hardly have penetrated through that mass of hair! At last Powyac placed a ball behind his shoulders, and over he rolled. *Procumbit humi bos*. I dashed up to him, and drove my knife to his heart.

' We took his *dépouilles* and tongue, and left some thousand pounds of good meat to the wolves. Back to the camp. Buffalo moving about all the evening. Camp pitched. We ate a side of Harriott's cow; such stuffing and feasting! The men eating the paunch raw, and sticking it down with raw marrow or a bit of nose gristle, while the *dépouilles* and hump were roasting on green branches.

Just before tea saw an old bull coming over the plain,

and stalked him under cover of some bushes. Came within one hundred and forty yards, and 'Kill-deer' administered a convincing argument in full sight of the camp, broke his shoulder, and did the same by the other (which he turned towards me before he knew what was the matter) with the other barrel. Down he went, and my knife was at his heart in half a minute.

Back to a fine supper of cow meat, hot and hot, all the best pieces. No sleep at night from the terrible row the wolves made over the carcass of my old bull.

Tuesday, July 27th.—Made a scandalous bad shot at a cow. I intended to hit her in the eye. Marks and traces of buffalo fresh everywhere. Found a bull among the wood. The Spirit held our horses while George and I hustled him. He was very spiteful and meant mischief, but could not find us among the bushes, and Bran* bothered him uncommonly, giving us time to load. He did not fall until seven shots were planted in his ribs and one in his head—a splendid fellow! sixteen and a half hands at the shoulder. After breakfast took to the woods with the Spirit and George. Found a bull, but the dog put him away. Another coming best pace towards us passed wider than I had expected from the bushes in which I had hid myself. George missed him. 'Kill-deer' into his ribs. Heard the ball thud. The shot measured one hundred and forty yards. The bull stood with the blood

* Bran, a dog.



pumping out as if driven by a forcing pump, from mouth and nose. By the time we reached him he was rolling down the hill, dead as Julius Cæsar.

Found a band in a small plain by a swamp. Broke a bull's shoulder, and pitched a second ball* into his rump as he made off. First shot too high. He ran like the devil. Got my horse and gave chase. Loosed Bran at him, but had too slow a nag to catch him. After many twists I found him at bay behind some bushes. Dashed nearly up to him before I was aware of it, and my horse fell just as the bull turned from the dog to charge. Luckily, he was weak and fell too, and before he recovered I had dropped him with the second barrel, and pitched a ball into his heart, followed by my knife.

Looked round, and found the Day Spirit had not appeared at the death, tried to find my way through the woods to the swamp where I had started. No go ! Fairly lost, hallooed like blazes, no answer ; thought of filling my flask, cutting flakes from the bull, and striking north by the compass to hit the track of the carts. The lake was salt as my dear old mother's nasty mixtures used to be!† It put me very much in mind of them, and I thought of her and wondered whether she would know me now if she saw me, wild and sun-scorched,

* All rifle bullets circular in these days.

† 'Nasty mixtures' — salts, senna tea, and black doses, the fashionable medicines of that date.

ragged and bloody, as I looked ! Just then I heard a faint halloo, answered, and the Spirit of the Day emerged from a thicket, fairer to my eyes than Aurora herself would have been at that moment, for *he* knew where fresh water was to be found, and *she* probably would not. Had a shot at a cow on my way to the carts, wounded but lost her. Killed two more bulls and a fat cow before night, brought away the meat of the latter. The first bull was very much attached to his fair ladye, and like a *preux chevalier* resolved to do battle for her. When I stalked the band they were standing together (and a terrible roaring and dust the old bulls of the band kicked up, by-the-bye !). My first ball was too well planted for her to go far, and she fell in a hundred yards. Her sweetheart, a noble bull, tried first to raise her with his horns, but failing in that he marched round her, roaring and ready to charge everything. A gentle hint from 'Kill-deer' at two hundred yards made him 'lave that'; but he returned and stood over her again, until I crept closer and dropped him from some bushes.

I did not overtake the carts till they were camped at a salt lake on the other side of a vast plain. Saw signs of Indians, buffalo carcasses lately killed, &c. Found them to be a camp of Crees, most of the men gone to war, and only a few left with the women and children.

Two of them came and sat all night at the camp fire chatting with Harriott. They had killed several buffalo with

their arrows—all those I took out of their quivers were bloody up to the feathers. They were much astonished at my rifle and compass, which they pronounced to be 'great medicine.'

Wednesday, July 28th.—A long march through a very pretty country. Day cold and wet in the morning. No game. Camped on a hill with a beautiful plain below us, studded with clumps of trees like a park, and a range of wooded hills on the other side.

Thursday, July 29th.—Rode down and caught a young crane, which the Day Spirit ate, as usual. Arrived at the south branch of the Saskatchewan about mid-day, and luckily found a bateau, notwithstanding which we were the whole day crossing our baggage, and floating over the carts.

Finding the bateau was very lucky, otherwise we should have had to cross our luggage in 'Pittawanagans' or Indian floats made of blankets, which will carry a wonderful load, and are towed across by a man swimming with the line in his teeth, which would have been hard work for me, as, being one of the best swimmers, I should have had many a traverse to make over a stream as broad as Esk in the highest flood, and very rapid. Camped at Duck Lake. Had a shot at a grey goose, of which there were many in the lake, but did not get him.

In danger of Blackfoot war parties. Precautions taken to watch the horses. 'Bird,' the brother of the Blackfoot chief,

who was with us, swore he heard an Indian dog bark, and went out to scout, but saw nothing. We spent an anxious night. The wolves were all round, and howled in various directions at once (which is the usual Indian signal when mischief is meant) especially towards day-break, the time usually chosen for attacks. I spent the night with 'Kill-deer' for a bed-fellow, and comforted myself with thinking that if they did rush the horses two of them would pay rather dear for their whistle. However, we saw nothing, and got to Carlton for breakfast.

Friday, July 30th.—This is a wild post among a wild race of beings. Harriott lived here for many years in charge, and says he had many an anxious hour when the war parties of the various tribes were prowling around.

On one occasion twenty Crees were in the fort at a time when the palisades were being repaired. The men (he had only ten) had very nearly finished their work when eighty Blackfeet made their appearance, and Harriott amused them through the remainder of that day and part of the following one, buying horses and trading. By that time they had increased to 800, and insisted on killing the Crees in the fort. The palisades were finished, so Harriott manned the gallery and ordered them off. They raised a pile of firewood at each of the opposite bastions and prepared to set fire, when Harriott ordered the two swivels to be loaded, and to be fired on the crowd. Just then the great 'Brave' of the band, who was a friend of Harriott's, rushed from his lodge where he had been

sleeping, and gave chase to the whole crowd, armed only with his dag, they flying before him like sheep.

The same Chief saved Harriott's life on another occasion and from the same cause, when a few Crees were surprised in the fort by a war-party of Blackfeet, and Harriott, sooner than give them up, ordered his gun, loaded it, and said, 'Now kill them and me too, for I die with them!' The Chief stepped forward, kissed each of the principal men and said, 'Go, my young braves, the white man's child shall not die!' They knew well what this meant, and that the next hint would be a ball or a stab, so each sneaked off, and Harriott was left in peace and the Crees in safety.

On another occasion they had some pigs at the fort, and one very fine boar was in a pen close by the palisade. The Indians coming there to trade looked on it as a great curiosity, and once a party of 'Stoneys' (Assiniboines) were looking at it when one exclaimed, 'If that were a bear how easily I could shoot him!' and presenting his gun the ball went through the boar's head. The man fled to the camp on the hills above, but was sought out and reproached by Harriott, and told that something dreadful would happen to him for shooting 'the great white Medicine.' This had such an effect that the poor fellow went raving mad, and died in the spring, entreating them to 'take away the boar.'

An Assiniboine was taken very ill at the fort, and laid up there through the winter, unable to move, being fed from

Harriott's table. In the spring his wife and family were employed in collecting wild fowls' eggs, &c., while he lived at his tent on the hill above. By these means he heard that owing to some Blackfeet being expected, Harriott's favourite horses were to be sent off under the charge of a half-breed to a 'cache' in the woods. He waylaid the half-breed, shot him, stole the horses, and was never heard of more at the fort.

Saturday, July 31st.—Left the fort this afternoon with eleven carts and about sixteen men in all. Great accounts of buffalo on the road and 'beaucoup de nations.' 'Out pistols,' in consequence. A broad river to cross at starting, about the width of the Thames at Westminster—*i.e.*, the north branch of the Saskatchewan. Forty-one horses to swim across, our party being augmented by some hunters in search of meat for the fort, and some young clerks going to distant posts in the frozen north. The crossing was a curious sight. Some young braves of the Crees aided at the operation, one dragging the leading horse in with a cabrèche in his teeth, while the others drove them from behind. Once fairly off the fun began, some two would get screeching and whooping on one horse's back, all swimming as they were, and down the whole three would go. Two or three more would hang on to another horse's tail, while one splendid fellow, naked as Apollo, was having a contest with an equally wild nag that would swim the wrong way. Camped six miles west of the river, having got safe over, carts, baggage, and all!



Sunday, August 1st.—Prudent and his young Cree hunter 'élève' with us. We were in hopes of seeing some of the remains of those vast herds which old Martin talked of having fallen in with, a few days before, on his way back from the Saskatchewan, although some large camps of Crees had been hunting the country since, and of course might have driven the greater portion away. The line lay through vast plains, with here and there a salt lake, but no good water, and the day scorching.

We found a band of buffalo (about forty) after breakfast. Prudent armed with his arrows (a rare instance of a white man being expert with the Indian weapons). Immediately carts were stopped, runners caught, balls stuffed into the mouths of the white men, and arrows into the belts of the Indians, handkerchiefs tied round *our* flowing locks, and off we went. The ground was good, we trotted up leisurely, and found our friends at a salt lake. As soon as we were perceived, we turned our horses and trotted away, each man lying flat along his horse, and the Crees bellowing furiously. The brutes came right towards us, full gallop, till they crossed our wind, when off they went, and we dashed at 'em. I intended to watch Prudent at work with his arrows, and followed him accordingly, till a good cow happening to cross my path, I laid into her, and after a short brush slapped a ball into her ribs. That little devil Charley pulled so infernally that I was some time loading, but caught her up again. She charged twice,

and fell at last with her front to the foe. Prudent killed one with the bow, George one, and the Indians two, also with the bow. I went to look at these cows, and found each arrow driven up to the feather in their flanks; one had two, the other three in her.

Suffered much from want of water. Tried the lake, but might as well have tried a dose of salts. Met lots of Crees on their way to the eastward. While cutting up my cow, two of these fellows came to me and talked incessantly, though aware that I did not understand one syllable of their language. At last one tried to take up my gun, and was much affronted at my opposing him, the copper cap having apparently caught his attention. He then offered me his, but I still refused. I then gave him some tobacco, we had a smoke, and it was all right.

Found water towards evening, very strong of buffalo, and thickly populated with worms. I drank it through a handkerchief and thought it capital. Stalked a herd, picked out a cow, and placed two balls behind the shoulder with 'Kill-deer'—a very sporting shot. Found them camped near a nice cool spring. Lots of Crees in the camp.

Monday, August 2nd.—Set out with Harriott to breakfast with his friends the Crees at their camp. Found it to be too far off, therefore returned. They were pitching towards Carlton, and were then camped on the 'Bloodbury* Lake,' a

* In the maps Redberry Lake.

large and pretty sheet of water, which with its swelling and broken 'côtes' reminded me of Bonnie Glen Affric.

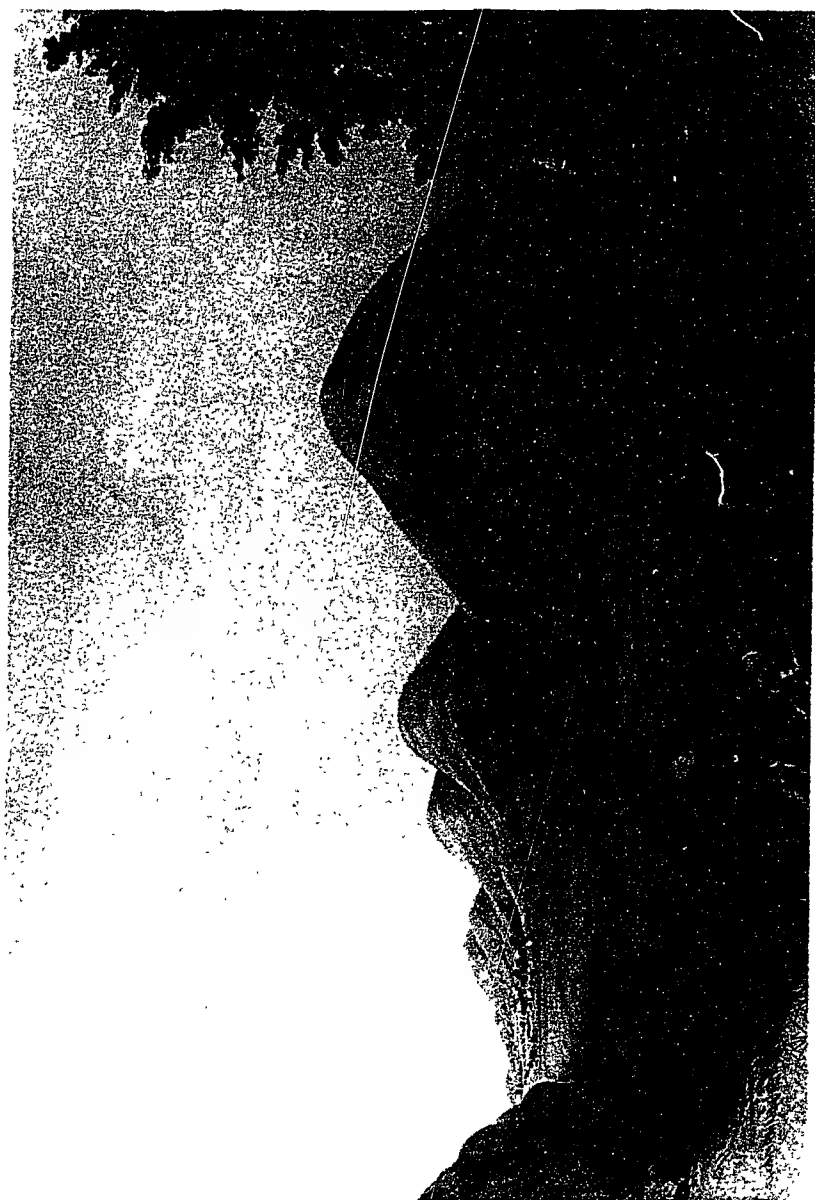
The country full of smoke from the fires which are beginning to spring up all around on the prairie, caused by the Indians' carelessness in raising camp, or lit by them intentionally, when desirous of hiding the traces of their 'travaux' from their enemies. Were overtaken by the whole male force of the Cree camp just after breakfast, they streaming across the prairie by twos and threes, full gallop, to the amount of fifty or sixty warriors, and a wilder set of devils I never saw!—all clothed in skin robes, some of the dresses very handsomely ornamented with porcupine quills, beads, ermine tails, and human hair (the scalp-locks being stained blue, red, and yellow). The horses also were painted, and each had some eagles' feathers in his mane.

We all dismounted, and sat down on the top of a bluff, amid a dense smoke, to make a small addition thereto. Among the party were many of Harriott's old friends, with whom he had spent many a jolly day in former times, and very glad they all appeared to be to see him. Towards evening while riding along a wide glen between two high prairie 'buttes,' I spied an old bull. Instantly off saddle, and on to Lambert. By this time he had topped the hill. The ground was all covered with rocks and holes, and I could not catch the great lumbering beggar. We had several scrambles but no fall, and at last the bull beat me down the steep sides of

the 'butte.' Several times the old fellow seemed to repent his cowardice, and appeared inclined to wheel and do battle, but he always changed his mind and rattled away faster than ever, while I sat on the top of the butte anathematising Lambert, the steep buttes, the badger holes, both separately and collectively, and watching the old bull bowling away on the plain below. I saw him, much to my delight, run right into the Cree camp, and instantly, every dog therein (at least sixty) set at him, and there was a magnificent shindy. The camp was in a narrow ravine just opposite my position, which was the only outlet in the neighbourhood to the glen, and the old gentleman popped into the hornets' nest before he was aware. Luckily, for him, there were only squaws and dogs at home, so he had it all his own way, and rattled through driving everything before him.

I took the track and found 'nos gens' camped by a lake, which proved to have a fine 'Glauber flavour,' rather against good tea-making, but otherwise wholesome in this grilling weather. Stalked a herd with Harriott and George. Harriott made a hash of it. No shot.

Tuesday, August 3rd.—Made a good stalk in open ground, and killed a bull, a very long shot. The people ran a band before I overtook them, but got nothing. The ground here very pretty, and broken with wood on most of the large bluffs. Stalked a bull with George, a moving shot, got within a hundred and ten yards, and hit him in the ribs. The old



bull cut some curious capers, thought he was going to charge, and George made a bolt for the horses. Laughed at him. The bull too much bothered, and rattled away down the hill, sent the right barrel after him, but without any effect. Camp too far off to follow him.

Wished Harriott to stop at the creek, but he did not like the neighbourhood, forty tents of Crees being not far off. After breakfast the men came to us, pouring over the hills on their little wild horses, very smart indeed. Another long smoke. Powyac, pipe-filler general. The chief bringing the large 'medicine' pipe, which was passed round until empty, when it was instantly replenished with tobacco and 'achegasepahquah,' no Indian ever smoking the former pure. The great Brave accompanied us; said Brave a very jolly fellow, and we are great friends. He has lost one eye by a Blackfoot arrow, and has taken many scalps. The Brave went with me to see me shoot an old bull, having heard of 'Kill-deer's' performances. Made a bad shot and missed, much to the Brave's disgust, who nevertheless made a much worse shot. Bad luck to-day. Stalked more buffalos towards evening. Ground bad. A fine cow and a bull on the skirt of the herd. Could not come in. The Brave began to roar so like a bull, that I several times looked round, thinking it must be one. Cow tried to come, but the bull would not let her, and kept between me and her. Shot, and missed her head, all that was exposed. Tried then to run, but not mounted to catch.

Returned to camp, and found them 'fixed' with a broken cart axle, by the side of a salt lake. Very thirsty, but no water. Smoke fearfully thick and nearly smothered with ashes. Made a good stalk at some geese on the mud in a lake, and shot one with the rifle. Took the track and ran it long before I caught the camp; nearly lost it once or twice on some hard bad ground, but recovered it by some very sporting 'casts forward,' worthy of an M.F.H.

Found another break-down, and no wood to repair damages. . . . Horses to watch now every night, which adds much to the fatigue, as we start at four, and do not generally camp till seven o'clock. The horses fail too, as they cannot feed when they are all huddled round the fire. The party divided into six watches, three taking it alternate nights.

Wednesday, August 4th.—Saw a bull, two cows, and a calf this morning, going best pace, and looming very large through the smoke. Lent Prudent my horse to run them, as we were short of meat. He could not catch them, as the ground was bad. Wish I had had Charley ready. Poor fellow! He looks very thin and poor, but as game as ever, and his large bright stag-like eye as clear. I never throw a leg over him except to run, so he has an easy time of it.

Breakfast at the Lac du Brochet, where Martin saw such countless herds—not one now to be seen, fire and Indians having driven them all away. Traces of fire, as far as the eye can reach, either burnt or burning. Harriott and I hustled a

sick wolf, a most barbarous murder. Day grilling hot, and air full of smoke and ashes. A long and most wearisome march. Camped late and very tired. Meat done, and rum-keg dry. Saw several cabris, but got none.

Thursday, August 5th.—Sat at the fire long after the camp had started. George had a fine shot at two cabris that came to look at us, but missed. My rifle had gone on with the carts. While running up the track I stopped behind to mend my bridle, and while doing so Bran came scuttling over a hill to me, with his tail between his legs, and a large wolf after him. I hid behind my horse, and the beggar came within five yards before he saw me, when he wheeled round and went and sat on a knoll about fifty yards off, looking exceedingly impertinent. How I wished for ‘Kill-deer’ to take the sauce out of him !

Overtook the camp at breakfast at ‘la rivière des Anglais,’ the said rivière being totally dried up, the channel covered with nothing but bare stones and a small stagnant pool remaining in one place, out of which we filled the kettles. The scarcity of water in the plains, Harriott tells me, is becoming alarming. Springs that he remembers have totally dried up, rivers that used to be belly-deep, now hardly have water enough to fill a kettle; and the Indians say that they shall soon be obliged to stick to the main rivers, or carry water-skins.

Went with the Brave to look for cabris. I hope he is a

better hand at stalking his enemies ; at deer, I am sorry to say, he is a muff ! Three times George and I had to show him the animals, and once when I caught sight of an old doe, with the shade on her, I had to point for three or four minutes before he could make her out.* Passed through an immense district of undulating country, all burnt or burning, and dined at Red-deer River. This part (*i.e.*, of the river) runs through a chain of wooded hills of the same name, said to be much resorted to by animals in the winter, who come there for food and shelter. The river is only a small burn of lovely water, but with very steep banks. My cart upset in going down, but was luckily righted by our united exertions before reaching the water, so my little treasures again miraculously escaped a ducking. Dined amid a smoke that was suffocating, and reach the Saskatchewan once more in the afternoon, and Fort Pitt before dusk.

The fort is situated in what we call on the Border a 'Holme,' by the side of the river, with the high 'coté' towering above it behind, and a still higher one in front, on the opposite side. The country is exceedingly pretty hereabouts, and indeed everywhere along the banks of the river—woods, undulating ground, and vast prairies. A large camp of Crees (about twenty lodges) arrived this evening, alarmed by the Blackfeet war-parties that are scouring the country, one of which war-parties killed eight squaws and

* The loss of the poor Brave's eye may partly account for this.

children and two men the other day, somewhere between this and Edmondton, and wounded several others. I went to see the Crees pitching their camp, and was much amused. The squaws (some of them very smart with their red-beaded metassins, and leather shifts ornamented with quill work) arrived first, each followed by her train of dogs, either loaded with saddle bags, or else harnessed to travais bearing their lodges, meat, and baggage. On arriving, the poles of the travais were converted into lodge posts; and while two or three of the old squaws set to pitching the lodge, the younger ones of each lodge started with the dogs to the nearest wood, for loads of green branches and firewood, and each dog when loaded returned alone from the wood with his burthen, to the quarters of his owner. The men, in the meantime, sat in knots about the knolls, chatting, smoking, and shooting their arrows at prairie dogs, &c. I paid a visit to a lodge where I had seen a very pretty young lady cooking her supper. Harriott and I went in. Our host, an old blind man, was sitting on a sort of sofa of buffalo skins, with a back to it, like a chair, as naked as he was born, excepting his waist-cloth, with two of his children sitting on his knee, and two more babies, belonging to another family, hooked up in their little boxes to the poles, looking like small mummies. The old fellow called immediately to his family, saying, 'Here are strangers come to my lodge, and I have nothing good

to give them. Bring food, my children!' Whereupon my pretty friend and another appeared, bearing 'naveaux de prairie,' and buffalo ribs roasted 'appalas' fashion, and the former having given us our share (a very large one, by-the-by) began eating her own supper with a most unladylike appetite, seizing large pieces with as pretty a set of little white regular teeth as any English lady, and 'flinching' them off the rib with a scalping knife, after which they disappeared in a miraculous manner, till I wondered how so pretty a little mouth could find room for such masses of solid beef!

Friday, August 6th.—Spent the day at Fort Pitt.

Saturday, August 7th.—Some fresh horses here. Started after breakfast, crossing the carts in a bateau, and swimming the horses. Accounts of want of water on the road are very alarming. Took the Cree warrior on with us, as he knows the only holes and springs where any can be got. Country all burning, and we were actually travelling over smoking ashes for some time. At dinner saw a cabri. The Indian and Powyac fired, but missed. No water where we expected to find some. Horses much distressed, the ones from the fort being very fat, and not seasoned like our old stagers. A long ride to 'Vermeille' creek, where we camped. A little stagnant, saltish, and bad water in the creek. The 'cotés' very pretty, green, steep and wooded, and spangled with pretty flowers, of all sorts and all colours.

Powyc saw something move in the bushes on the opposite side, just as we were unloading, but lost sight again. I pushed through and searched about, hoping it might be a bear, but could find nothing, and returned ; when, just as I was undressing for a wash, a huge stag dashed up the steep brae opposite, and out of sight over the hill. Francois, the half-breed, after it on a horse bare-backed, and killed it about two miles off after a short run. Went with them to bring home the meat, an enormous animal, as big as a buffalo cow, only twelve points, but a spread of six feet between the antlers, and three inches of fat on the haunches, yet they said it was a small and lean one.

Sunday, August 8th.—Expected to fall in with buffalo every minute. Prudent killed a buck cabri before breakfast. Overtook the camp after, at a saltish lake, which the horses managed to drink, but we could not. A bull came to the water just as we were starting, and McKenzie borrowed my rifle to kill him, which he did after a long approach.

An alarm of Indians, a Cree, who was with us, having seen heads above a neighbouring bluff. It turned out to be two poor Crees returning from the camp where so many had been murdered, having no guns, no ammunition, not even a knife, and no food, nothing but a spear made out of an old bayonet, between them. They saw our horses, took us for Blackfeet, and were most deucedly frightened.

I killed an old bull shortly after breakfast, and presently

we came on an immense herd, scattered all over a vast undulating plain on our left. Harriott would not stop, so Prudent and I went at them alone on foot, hit several, but killed none, unluckily, as we wanted some cow meat. Found Harriott at dinner at a good spring, rather alarmed at our long stay, as the war-parties were plentiful in the neighbourhood. What a luxury a good drink is! after a long march in grilling weather, and after having had nothing but brackish water, or none at all for the last two or three days. Camped at a creek after another long march. Great fires in the belt of woods that divided us from the large plains. These fires looked very grand after dark, as the flames ran up some huge pine or poplar, with the whole sky red, and bright as day for miles around.

Monday, August 9th. — Remained at the fire long after the camp started. While cantering on to overtake them I spied some lodges, and a large band of horses, on the opposite side of the vale through which we were travelling. Rode on to a knoll to reconnoitre, and could see no men about, which looked odd. Five of us remained with our own band of horses, and the two half-breeds, for fear of accidents, pushing them along smartly. Presently we saw a large party of Indians, all armed, riding towards us. Took 'Kill-bull' out of the cover, and put caps on, and as all the party seemed shy, McKenzie and I dashed off towards them, thinking to 'make a spoon or spoil a horn' of it, at once; but keeping

a sharp eye for hostile demonstrations. As I approached, I repented my hurry, for a more truculent-looking set of scoundrels I never saw, and I observed that each man had his bow strung, and his war-arrows in his bridle hand and those who had guns had the covers off. However, it would not do to turn, so I pushed up the hill at a gallop; followed by McKenzie, and shook hands with the chief, and with them all in succession. They proved to be Crees and half-breeds, who had pushed out to see what was stirring so near their camp. They told us that it 'rained buffalo' on our road, and that they were going to hunt the nearest herd to-day. Overtook the camp travelling along a chain of lovely little lakes, with wooded broken ground on each side, and the lakes as full as they could hold of wild-fowl, and of many geese. Saw a good many old bulls on the opposite side, gave chase to three that were lolloping along ahead of the carts, and a clincher from 'Kill-bull' stopped an old fellow, as he was toddling up a hill about a mile to the left of the party. While flinching him, and taking his tongue for want of better, I heard a devil of a row below me, and saw Powyac and another half-breed rattling away at the tail of a huge herd, coming right for me, and making the earth tremble again, with their galloping and roaring. Le 'Brun Farouche' was no runner, so I had no other chance than a quiet shot, and, hiding in a bush, I waited to pick out a good cow. 'Kill-bull' missed fire, and the second barrel, though well administered at thirty

yards, took no more effect than if I had shied a pat of butter at her. Crammed spurs into Le Brun to follow my cow, overtaken by some of the party, Powyac and the herd out of sight, over the hill among the bushes. Met a large herd in the teeth, hid in the bushes and as they passed I floored one fat cow, and George another. While cutting up our meat, saw four bulls, stalked them, and I killed one with the first barrel, and wounded the second, which died hard, taking four more shots. George killed another. The open plain to the left, black with animals.

Pushed for the camp, with our meat for breakfast, and to ask for a holiday to run the herds on the plain. Got a half holiday. Lots of tit-bits at breakfast; but too fidgetty to eat, the plain being covered with buffalo in sight. Out with 'the smooth gun' and saddled Charley. George on Lambert. The Crees were at them before we could cross the swamp, where we had terrible floundering. Met a herd with four Crees after them. The ground very bad and full of large badger holes. The Crees screeching, yelling, and pushing their little horses, as if riding on a bowling green. Was not going to be beat by Indians, so pushed also, had two or three terrible flounders, but no fall, and made my rush, giving Charley his head, as the animals were passing up a steep bank. I knocked one down like a rabbit. While looking at him, saw a fine bull going best pace to George. Called out, but he was not loaded, so ran myself. That little devil



Charley as game as ever, and though the bull had a long start, Charley placed me at his side at the foot of a hill, with a wood at the top. A great struggle for the shot, before he gained the shelter, and I planted one well into his ribs, as he dashed into covert. Pulled up to load, and then after George, who had followed him. Saw George dodging round the covert and hanging back, reproached him for not pushing in, fearing I should lose the bull. George said something as I passed, I did not hear what, and then I found myself in two minutes fast among fallen trees, and Charley unable to move. Heard a slight cracking among the bushes, and tried to struggle on. Suddenly there was a tremendous crash, and the bull was upon me, a fallen tree was between us, and he could not charge up. Pitched another ball into him, and prepared for a bolt, but he fell dead.

A grand day's sport! Killed several more. Saw herds after herds all day, in the most beautiful country that can be imagined. Lakes, woods, and creeks in all directions, and mesasqueton berries thick as blackberries in England. Camped at night at the end of the lakes. Buffalo herds all round us, and their roaring at a distance sounded like the thunder of a huge waterfall. Several alarms at night from bulls frightening the horses, which came galloping into camp, and nearly knocked over the tents. Had to fire at two buffalos before morning.

Tuesday, August 10th.—A damp, raw, nasty morning, the first we have had. Saw many buffalo. Stalked a herd, wounded a cow and two bulls, made some fine shots, but got none. The old bulls very tough. The cow had five balls in her, and yet she beat us. Travelled all the morning through countless herds, but the track of the camp was so bad to follow, from the ground being so hard beaten by buffalo, that we were too much occupied for sport.

Came up with them at last, at dinner, and were much quizzed about bringing no meat, they having killed two fat cows. Harriott shot a fox, and after dinner I went down with him to approach a herd. I killed two bulls and hit a cow, none under 150 yards, much to his astonishment at the long range.

Went off the track with him to hunt. We killed two cows and a bull, and then turned to join the party with the meat; but could not find the track. We had plenty of meat, and the river was not more than thirty miles off, lying due north, so I did not care; but he was anxious about his people, and his daughter, among the war-parties. So we hunted about very carefully and at last found the traces of wheels. I killed another bull and cow before night, and we camped late after much sport.

A prairie camp is always merry, when meat is plentiful, and jokes, marrow-bones, 'appalas,' and 'grillades du nord,' always accompany each other; besides the rum keg had to

be finished to-night, and the water was drinkable, so we were happy enough !

Wednesday, August 11th.—A raw, dreary morning, bushes all wet, very cold to ride through. Lost two horses and a mare of Monsieur Thibault's. Half-breeds tracked them up, and brought them to the camp at breakfast. The greater number of the party (myself among them) ill, from the enormous quantities of mesasqueton berries devoured yesterday. Though said berries were in greater quantities, and still finer to-day, nobody, or very few, appeared inclined to try them. They certainly are very nice, the good ones having very much the taste of a juicy black Hamburg grape.

Crossed two bad creeks after breakfast, one of them very steep, and the banks a great height. Much difficulty and labour in getting the carts through, and one broke down with a man, a woman, and some children in it.

Harriott in great spirits at being so near to what he called home, having been absent for eighteen months from his wife and children. He was also rather anxious about the Crees who were with us, whom, he said, any Blackfeet about the fort would immediately try to kill. I watched the old Brave Comenacous. He did not know how many of his most deadly enemies might at that very moment be within a mile of him, and that it was very doubtful whether Harriott could protect him, yet he rode on at the head of the band,

humming his wild Indian song, and looking as unconcerned as if he were going on a hunting party.

We soon arrived on the steep high bluff above the Saskatchewan, and saw Fort Edmondton on the opposite height, with the Union Jack flying at the flag-staff. As soon as we were seen, there was a great scuffle in the fort, and by the time we had wound down the steep defile, leading to the water side, the bateau was off with young Rowan—the ‘Chargé d’Affaires’ and a great hunter—in it, on its way to greet us. At this moment a gaunt and hungry looking savage came crawling along under the river bank, and seeing Rowan on the bow of the bateau, exclaimed, in Cree, ‘He must be a great medicine! He is alive still!’ On Rowan’s landing he seemed equally surprised to see the Indian. He told us that four days before our arrival he had crossed the river with this savage to see if he could meet us, and—for almost the first time in his life on that side of the river—without a gun! On ascending the bank the savage, who was behind, called out to him to ‘take care!’ And on looking back, he saw a naked Blackfoot (who was called Harriott’s son, by the way) in his war paint, creeping up close to shoot him. The Indian fired at six paces and missed. Rowan’s horse went off at speed amidst a volley from thirteen more Blackfeet who had hid in the bushes. They all missed; but the ground was torn up all round him, and many balls passed close to him. They chased, but, finding they

could not catch him, turned on the Indian, and wounded his horse, followed up the trace, as, from the blood, they thought the man was hit; but he escaped, and hid in the bushes for four days, with nothing to eat but two young ducks that he caught, and he had just returned when we arrived. Rowan in the meantime made a circle, and returned to the ferry, knowing his family would be anxious about him, and that there was no one left at the fort but two old men,—the rest having gone off to the haymaking and berry-picking. He met three more Blackfeet, who chased him into the creek we had crossed in the morning, after which he returned again, and crossed over.

On hearing that many war-parties were in the neighbourhood we bethought us of the man, woman, and children that we had left with the broken-down cart; and Powyac, Prudent, and myself started on the back track to see after them. ‘Kill-bull’ on the saddle bow, out of cover, and caps on, ditto the belt pistols. Felt not to care a d——n for a score of the sneaking rascals with old ‘Kill-bull’ and a good horse. Met the cart all safe, so we were ‘quittes pour la peur!’

AT FORT EDMONDTON AND EXPEDITIONS FROM THENCE.

AUGUST 12TH TO 26TH.

Sunday, August 15th.—Have been here now three or four days, and long for the prairie again. Off to-morrow with some half-breeds, to kill meat for the fort, into the Blackfoot country. Perhaps they will have my scalp before this day week, and, at all events, they shall earn it!

I wonder what they are doing at old Netherby to-day. I think I see my dear old father, my mother, and the bairns* sitting in the old pew at Kirkandrèws, listening to the Rector. Perhaps they are thinking of their wild boy Fred! Sometimes I think of the bonnie heather braes of old Bewcastle,† and fancy I can hear the moor-cocks crowing ‘out bye’ at White Lyne, the Hart Head, and the Middles, as I sit on a prairie bluff, with my rifle over my knee, and my horse grazing at the length of his cabrèche.

The people and the deeds are wild here indeed. This

* ‘The Bairns’—Frederick Graham’s younger brothers and sisters, the eldest of whom was eleven years younger than he was, he being at this time twenty-seven years old. The eldest of the younger five a girl of sixteen, the youngest a boy of eleven.

† Grouse moors near Netherby.

fort and the neighbourhood have been, and still are, the scenes of many a fierce fight, and many a cruel butchery. There are now at the fort a poor woman and a man of the Crees, who were badly wounded by the Peigans a few days ago. The woman has the side of her face blown off, and the man has been shot through the thigh, and Harriott has told me many anecdotes of fights and skirmishes all round the fort, with both Blackfeet and Stone Indians, in their attempts to steal the horses, &c.

Sunday, August 22nd.—Returned safe yesterday, and met with no Indians. Camped the first night at the Lac du Foin, a good day's march to southward, across the Beaver hills, and through thick woods most of the way. Saw some bulls about the lake, and many traces of bears on the road. Our party consisted of nine in all—two Crees, four Englishmen, and three half-breeds. At least little François Lucie, that prince of backwoodsmen, is quarter-bred. François is a fine little veteran 'Coureur des Prairies,' as tough as steel, and 'game' to the backbone; the hero of several fights with the Assiniboines, several of whom he has killed, and he tells his story with a grin of how he ripped up the last fellow with his 'dag,' as if it were the best joke possible.

The march next day still to the southward, within sight of the woods that fringe Battle River, far into the Blackfoot hunting-grounds, where we proposed to camp, if we did not find animals. I killed one or two bulls, a sign that cows

were not far off. Vast plains, all eaten bare from the quantity of animals that had passed lately. No wood, no grass, no water, and a scorching day. Arrived at last on the shores of a huge salt lake, and François spied a large band of animals on the opposite shore. Made the *détour* successfully, and found them on a fine level plain by the lake shore. A very large band. Ran them, killed twelve fat cows. Charley went crazy, and ran away with me. I only killed one and had a hand in killing two others, one of whom charged gallantly, till she fell. Returned late to our cache of horses and baggage, and camped at a salt lake, after cutting up the meat. The water abominable. Kept close in our little hollow by the lake all night. Horses all picketed, and the men round the fire, with their arms ready.

Plenty to eat that night, to make up for the previous night's 'short commons' of dry biscuit and bad tea. Belle Fesse* very much frightened, not having recovered his being made a target of, last week, and we could not persuade him to leave the camp, 100 yards after dark, to look after his horses.

Off early to complete our load. Approached two herds. I killed one cow and lost another. George killed another cow, after François had missed. The half-breeds and Crees ran the last band, and killed three more. I saw the brutes cut up one cow alive, a most cruel operation. Came back

* 'Belle Fesse,' the Cree Indian, who had escaped from the Blackfeet so recently.

to camp early, heavily loaded with meat, and found all right. All the white men very ill from the water. Dreadfully thirsty, but dared not drink. Chewed a bullet. Sent François off with Belle Fesse and the barrels to search for some. Not home at nightfall. Became very anxious in such a dangerous country. Kept the people together and employed myself herding the horses. Saw François at last against the sky, and very glad to see him. Barrels full of good water. They had seen lots of buffalo and no enemies, and judged by the number of animals that none were near. They cautioned me about sleeping far from the fire, as, if an *é*' should arise, I might be cut off before I could be aroused.

Very ill next day from the water. Sent the loaded horses off with the meat early, and made a *détour* ourselves. Killed several bulls. One charged George, and nearly caught him. Found the marks of many bears, but saw none. No water, and very hot. François tried a salt lake, but could not drink it. I chewed a bullet and some tobacco alternately. Found lots of bird cherries, and *mesasqueton* berries, and very glad of them. A great deal of strong wood to get through, very thick with fallen timber. A very long march, and did not overtake the camp till the moon was high. Came along the Indian trail through the woods. George killed a skunk in the wood, and smelt abominably in consequence. Luckily it was a young one, or we should have been all poisoned.

Arrived all safe at the Saskatchewan yesterday. Saw the

traces of the war-party that so nearly shot Rowan and Belle Fesse when they left the trail. Belle Fesse in a great funk all last night, and would not stir a yard from the fire. Comenacous came over to us in the boat with none of his finery on, only his breech clout; and driving our horses in, swam across holding to the last one's tail, and screeching like a demon. Off to-morrow up the river with François for a last hunt, and then for Old England. The Columbia* would be a bore. No sport on the road, and great uncertainty about the means of getting on.

I hate the sight of these forts. Strange, large tumbledown places, like lumber-rooms on a vast scale. All the white men living in them, look as if they had been buried for a century or two, and dug up again, and had scarcely yet got their eyes open, for they look frightened when they see a stranger! The women are masses of fat, and speak nothing but Cree; and dogs and Indians wander about the large, dark, and filthy courtyards at pleasure—the latter so noiselessly with their moccasined feet, that, when you sometimes sit down to write alone, on looking up, you find a circle of wild faces, with their large black eyes, shaded by their long elf locks, fixed upon you, watching everything you do with great attention. Then no one can conceive the nuisance of the dogs. Each fort has a hundred or two of these devils, which, Harriott

* The alternative contemplated would have been to go on through British Columbia, and round the World home.

tells me, are necessary for the winter sleighing, and these roam about searching for food (they are never fed), the courtyard being a perpetual scene of growling, snarling, and yelping all day, and of lamentable howling choruses all night. The plains, the plains for me!

Wednesday, August 25th.—Went to hunt ducks in the little lakes near here with Louis and McKenzie. Came back with our horses loaded before evening. Louis killed 110 himself the other day.

START EASTWARD.
JOURNEY TO FORT PITT, AND EXPEDITION THENCE
TO THE LAC DU DIABLE.

AUGUST 26TH TO SEPTEMBER 4TH.

Thursday, August 26th.—Off at sunrise, with four loaded horses, Rowan, Rankin for cook, Belle Fesse, Comenacous, and Abraham.

Good-bye to Harriott! Poor fellow! He has been kindness itself to me! Everything he had was at my service, men and horses were always ready for me, and all the little delicacies of the 'Nor'-wester' (few and scarce enough, God knows! and therefore the more precious) were prepared for my use! *i.e.*, 4 lbs. of tea (he only had 6 lbs. altogether for himself and family!) a little keg of rum, some sugar, and a few biscuits, besides some capital Blackfoot 'boucane.' Travelled all day through strong woods, and broke my tent-poles, which I left there and then. Great trouble with the packs, which were constantly being torn off by the fallen timber. No want of water on this bank of the river. We constantly were crossing lovely springs and little rivers of clear,

cool water, both this day and the following one, generally flowing at the bottom of deep wooded glens, very pretty and wild, but the devil and all to get through, with loaded horses. Camped late. Sky threatening a stormy night. Missed my tent poles. Tried to make an 'abris' with the oil-cloth, but failed in the dark. Heavy rain.

Friday, August 27th. — Reached the creek we meant to stop at last night at about seven o'clock. Rowan's calculations of distance rather wild. Poor Rankin's horse gave out here. I examined it, and found inflammation running high. Set George to bleed the horse. He took two quarts, and the animal started afresh *au léger*.

Saw the tracks of a large bear and two young ones, quite fresh. Rowan and I tried hard to rout her out, but she had got our wind and was not forthcoming. Saw some more fresh signs of bears among the choke cherry bushes, with which the banks of the river (the Saskatchewan), along which we were travelling, were covered, loaded with their black fruit. The bears had been feeding here in all directions, on the berries, devouring them by armfuls.

Some of the views of the noble river, with its steep wooded bluffs, and long reaches through the forest vistas, very, very bonnie! While every now and then we look down from a high bluff upon a large 'holme' * by the water side, studded with clumps of fine timber and single trees, like an English

* 'Holme,' border name for a grass meadow by the side of a river.

park. In one of these, at 'la rivière de la terre blanche,' the remains of two old forts of the rival companies* were situated, in a lovely spot, which would have made a Belvoir or a Chatsworth had it been in England; but here it was only known as a good camping spot to the rough Nor'-wester, or scarce more wild and savage Indian. The two forts had quarrelled as usual, and fought, till (like the Kilkenny cats) there was very little left of them—*i.e.*, of the men belonging to them—when the Blackfeet stepped in, and settled the matter by knocking the remainder on the head, and burning the forts.

Saw what we took to be red deer, across the creek. Jumped from my horse, and through the river, and up the 'côté' with 'Kill-bull' to stalk them. They turned out to be Indian dogs, and I saw the smoke of the lodge-fires above the trees. We got our goods and chattels through the creek; and then Rowan and I set off, at full gallop, to see who and what they were. They proved to be Strongwood Crees drying buffalo meat. Powyac's brother Sagemac was with them, and brought us some capital 'dépoilles,' 'appalas,' and marrow grease, besides dried berries and pounded meat. I never saw such a contrast between two of the same family as between Powyac and his brother. The former, excepting for his long hair, and something wildish in the 'cut of his jib,'

* Rival companies,—'Hudson's Bay' and 'North West' were the rival Trading Companies, who frequently quarrelled until in 1822 they were amalgamated under the name of Hudson's Bay Company.

in the make of his clothes and accoutrements, might have passed well enough for a German 'jäger.' His brother (the Mosquito) was a complete savage, leather shirt, metassins, and robe, and spoke not one syllable of French.

Saturday, August 28th.—Mosquito with us. Got among buffalo. I opened the ball by flooring an old bull with 'Kill-bull,' and took his head for Netherby. Found a band before breakfast, and prepared to 'run.' I picked out a cow, and killed her with difficulty, making some very bad shots. Tackled a bull on my way back. The old gentleman pug-naciously disposed, and showed fight directly. Pitched a ball into his shoulder as he came on, charging gallantly, and he fell—a brave old fellow! I was almost sorry for him. Took meat from my cow for breakfast, and hacked out my favourite marrow-bones. Saw buffalo in herds upon herds all day. Shot many. Found one band in a fine plain, and, though loaded with meat, I could not resist running. I rode Rowan's best horse, a perfect runner. Approached very close, lying on my horse's neck. Made my rush, as soon as they began to move, and killed my first cow, in good style, knocking her over like a rabbit. Picked another that led me a long dance, through bad ground, fallen timber, and long grass, and up and down steep hills; many flounders, but no fall. A run over the stiffest part of Leicestershire is a joke to running buffalo with half-breeds through a bad rolling prairie! Collared the cow at last, and knocked her

over a steep pitch on to the top of an old bull. Bull, cow, horse, and I all down in the hole together. Bull deucedly astonished! No harm done. Cow up again, and showed fight, but I was out of her way, and loaded before she charged. Another ball dropped her. Flinched a little meat, and off to join the party.

Travelled through large herds during the remainder of the day. Towards night arrived at a large plain, at the foot of the hills, with a lake on one side, the plain covered with countless herds. I struck off after some that were moving towards the southward, and was soon surrounded by vast bands, disturbed by the party moving down into the plain. Their roaring and galloping shook the prairie. I fired away all my balls and struck for the trail. Could not find it, but caught a glimpse of a white horse far away over the plain below. Gave chase, and overtook Rowan in a pine hammock by the lake, talking to a fine, clean-made half-breed, whom, it appeared, the party had seen skulking among the bushes, and, taking him for a Blackfoot, had charged upon him. The half-breed told us that the Cree camp was not far off, and that there was to be a great dance that night, previous to their going to war; on hearing which we pushed on to see the fun. We camped close to the lodges at the end of the lake, and soon had the whole of the young men round our fire, to smoke and chat with Rowan.

After supper we went to the dancing lodge, or rather

enclosure, for it was only a large space fenced round with skins, and open at the top, and we found the men sitting all round the lodge, and the women at one end. A fresh-dressed robe was spread for us next to the chief, and the pipe offered to us. We gave a fathom of tobacco, and smoked away while the dance went on. The dancers plunged and capered round after each other to the sound of parchment drums, and a low monotonous chant, ending, every now and then, in a yell. After which the women took it up, all apparently very filthy and ugly, as all the Strongwood Crees are. There was a fire at each end of the lodge, and in the centre were the materials for the feast, consisting of dried berries, pounded meat, &c., and also the 'medicine' of the tribe, and the hair, &c., of their dead relations, to which some of the feast was to be offered, before they ate themselves. About this period I began to feel some unpleasant tickling sensations about my legs, which warned me to be off, so I saw no more.

Sunday, August 29th.—A large wooded plain perfectly covered with buffalo for miles and miles. 'Ran' with the half-breed and we killed a cow between us. Both badly mounted, the ground frightfully dangerous from badger holes, and the dust so thick that we were blinded before we had run half a mile. Many buffalos fell, and some broke their necks, and we were constantly in danger of falling over them in the dark,* as they were tumbling

* In the dark caused by the thick dust.

about. While cutting up our cow, we were often obliged to stand up and shout to keep the immense herds from running over us. For an hour and a half we remained, and still they kept pouring on, from the westward, disturbed by the rest of the party, who yet must have been miles away.

At length we started, with buffalo scouring past us on all sides, and the black dust so thick, that we could not see twenty yards. Lost, for some time; no track to be found, of course, and nothing but buffalo to be seen. At last we pushed on to a high bluff, and fixed on the direction, which we followed, till I found a horse's track in a swamp, and we then picked it along, like hounds hunting a cold scent, until I spied my old friend the white baggage horse again going over a bluff. When I started, I passed at all events for a white man, when I returned, no chimney-sweep could be blacker. Breakfast, and a wash about two p.m.

Marched till dark, and still no water. Sent Abraham off to search, and lost him. Tried to reach the Saskatchewan, but could not for the thick woods. Lost ourselves in the dark, and got entangled among steep braes, and fallen timber. Had to camp without water. Abraham found us, having seen the firelight from a bluff.

Monday, August 30th.—Reached Moose River early, where we should have camped last night. A large beaver dam here, but no beaver to be seen. George's horse took

fright going up the steep brae from the river, and upset him—kicked the saddle round with ‘Kill-bull’ on it, smashed the saddle all to pieces, and rolled down about thirty yards, very much excited. ‘Kill-bull’ luckily not damaged.

Arrived at Fort Pitt at sundown, on a stormy evening. Came very fast the last part of the way, for fear of the war-parties, which are frequently lurking in the neighbourhood of the fort, and by whom many lives have been taken and many horses stolen.

Tuesday, 31st August.—Making preparations to start on a last hunt to ‘le petit lac du Diable,’ half a day beyond Battle River, where the Indians say that there is a great hole in the earth, out of which all the animals come! This lake is rarely visited, on account of the danger, and from what I hear, no white man has ever been there. I expect great sport, and hope to dodge the war-parties; for we cannot fight, as I shall only have with me Acaapoh (the Blackfoot half-breed, a splendid fellow by the way, and a first-rate hunter), George, and young Simpson.

Wednesday, September 1st.—Killed a cabri with the rifle, at ‘la Grande Coulée.’ Roasted the ribs for dinner, having no provisions with us. The lake is very pretty. The fringe of woods that overhang it beginning already to assume their autumn tints. The water perfectly covered

with wildfowl and geese. Evening found us in the wide wastes between this and Battle River.

Found a small band of cows. Acaapoh ran them, and killed a good one. We threw away the remains of our cabri, and supplied its place with beef. Camped after dark at the bottom of a deep, dank 'cleugh' beside a spring. The fire lighted in silence, no one spoke above his breath. Several bulls about the spring, but no shots to be fired about camp at night. Killed one or two geese this day.

Thursday, September 2nd.—Killed a bull close by, at starting. Breakfasted at Battle River. Horses kept close. This river is full of beaver, but they are rarely trapped, on account of the danger. There are also quantities of deer, and grizzly bears in the woods. The 'côtés' are very high, and bold, and wild; the scenery altogether very fine, but no grass, from its being all devoured by the number of animals. Crossed the river, and up the 'côté,' saw tracks of large deer, and bears. Bands of buffalo all round. Met a band coming straggling through a little valley among the hills. Pitched a ball into a fat cow's ribs, and another into her brain before she knew what had happened. She fell to the shot, dead. George killed another.

All this day we were stalking and killing buffalo and cabris among the hills, till we arrived at the 'Devil's Lake,' one of the loveliest spots I ever saw! Far, far away to

the south the lake extended, with several islands on it, and the shores high, and covered with timber and clumps of wood, and lovely little prairies between each thicket. Whole herds of buffalo and cabris, and here and there a huge deer, were roaming along the wood edges, or licking the lake salt, while in one or two places, a large band of bulls and cows were swimming the lake to join those that were flying from us.

We pounded away at these poor devils, as they landed, and cut them up sadly. At this moment our baggage horse (an old buffalo runner) took it into its head to have a run after the flying bands, and made a sad havoc among my plate-chest, &c., *i.e.*, the camp-kettle, a two-pronged fork, an old pewter spoon, and a teapot, which were scattered over the prairie,—not to mention a small bag of biscuits, some fat buffalo steaks, and some sugar, which latter I looked upon as the acme of luxury! I gave chase and recovered the fugitive, after a hard run, and after administering sundry thumps on the nose with the butt of the rifle, before I could turn the horse, so bent was he on having his fun out! Camped at a lovely little plain surrounded by wood, which reminded me of ‘Jack’s Pasture’* at dear old Netherby; the spring beside

* ‘Jack’s Pasture’—an open green space on a slope surrounded by high trees, with a burn at the lower end. Since then planted with pines, and now called the ‘Pinetum.’

it, which we were lucky enough to stumble on, was situated in a deep 'cleugh,' and was completely poached up by animals; broad roads, like a country cart track, being worn down to it on both sides. Many large bear tracks on the paths.

Left George and Simpson in camp, and off with Acaapoh 'pour faire un petit tour.' Followed a buffalo track through the woods by the lake-side. Found the track of a large bear quite fresh before us, when, on turning a corner, we spied a huge grizzly bear, feeding on the carcase of a buffalo at the lake-side, and a band of wolves waiting at a respectful distance till he should have finished his supper. Acaapoh, in a great state of excitement, asked if I was frightened? I told him, 'not particularly.' Would I shoot the bear? he asked. Will he finish his supper? quoth I. Acaapoh cautioned me, that if I missed him, he would 'foncer dessus,' and one of us must go down! 'D——ned the expense,' and to it we went, to stalk him. The wind was bad, and the beggar was upon his hind legs, looking out for squalls, before we were through the little copse, behind which we had left the horses. Acaapoh was in a fluster, and what was worse, he flurried me. 'Shoot, shoot,' he said, and shoot I did, and oh! shame and disgrace! I missed him at ninety yards. 'Bang' went Acaapoh, and off he cut like lightning, his ball skipping away across the lake, two yards over the old

bear, who was getting rather displeased at being so disturbed at his supper, and began to shuffle along the lake shore at a very respectable pace, growling uncommonly. At this interesting moment, 'Kill-bull' once more opened her oracular jaws, from the thicket, with a missive, which, like the laws of the Medes, was not to be gainsayed. 'Flop' went the bullet against the old gentleman's fat side, and over he rolled, 'tail over top' in a most undignified manner, got up again, gave two or three uncommonly ugly roars and growls, tore his side with his claws and teeth, staggered a few steps, and fell down again, a lifeless lump of fur and bear's grease.

'Woo-whoop! tear him and eat him!' His skin was soon at the camp, and his fat at the fire.

Found George herding the buffalo, *i.e.*, trying to keep them out of the spring by slipping a ball into one, now and then. The brutes dirtied all our water as fast as we scratched holes to get it clean.

Friday, September 3rd.—Some bulls came through the camp last night, and nearly ran over us in the dark. The wolves were round in hundreds, drawn by the smell of the meat, and kicked up an infernal row with their howling. Altogether 'Jack's Pasture' was not a peaceful bedroom by any means, neither are 'Kill-bull' and a 'dag' and pistol pleasant bedfellows, but I am used to them now, as well as to sleeping always in my clothes.

I don't know how it is, but one does not want sleep in this country. After the hardest day, I hardly shut an eye during the few hours I lie down. Though, at a fort, one makes up for it by sleeping two days and nights at a stretch !

The horses all missing, and Acaapoh off to hunt them up; away so long, that I went out to look for a deer by myself. I found the whole band of horses behind the nearest clump of bushes, not two rifle-shots from the camp. Saw two deer swimming the lake, but could not get to them, and a large hind leaping away through the woods, while I was busy with the horses.

Went to hunt by myself, and had not gone far before Acaapoh overtook me, and we struck for the woods. I shot a large stag, as big as a prize ox ; put two balls in his neck, one after the other, as he rose from his lair ; he fell dead to the second. I brought his head on a horse to camp. He had six inches of fat on his haunch and prime meat, yet we left it all to the wolves.

Had a good sleep after breakfast, and then went out to kill a bull, in order to have his bladder to carry my bear's grease. Found one coming to the spring, and placed one of ' Kill-bull's ' convincers in his heart at one hundred yards. Slashed out what I wanted with my dag, and returning to camp found all hands asleep, as sound as tops. Gave the Indian yell, which made them jump ' uncommon.'

The sun being low, off to hunt again. Killed a large hind, and returned at dark.

A very wet evening. Nothing is more unpleasant than returning late to a hunting camp on a rainy night. Any little means you may have of making a shelter are unavailable. Wood cannot be found for the fire in the dark, or if found, the fire can scarce be lighted. The cooking is unsuccessful for want of light, and the rain drenches everything, so that it will not cook.

‘Smoked the pipe of patience under the arbour of resignation,’ and diverted myself with listening to Acaapoh ‘sacré’-ing at the rain, for spoiling his ‘appalas’ and roasting ribs. Never did more ingenious oaths issue from man’s mouth than from that of this highly gifted savage! First he would d——n the rain, then curse the Blackfeet for making us hide in the thick bushes, and lastly abuse himself for not foreseeing the storm, and returning in time, to clear a space and make an ‘abris.’ I pulled my ‘capuchon’ over my head, and rolled myself up in my blanket, slept sound and supperless; my thoughts being of my dear old mother, and the many cautions I had received from her at various periods, to avoid draughts and damp beds. N.B.—It was raining buckets-full, and blowing a hurricane.

Awakened by the wolves close to my head, tearing and howling and snarling over my two deer-skins. I am

sure there must have been fifty of them. I shied everything I could lay my hands on at them, but to no purpose. Dozed again till daybreak, then got up and made a 'Nor'-wester' toilet, *i.e.*, one stretch, two stamps and a scratch, and was then ready for the day's work.

Saturday, 4th September.—Very anxious to go further up the lake, but Acaapoh and Simpson both would have it that it would be 'a tempting of Providence' to remain longer, with so small a party. So we 'vize'd' for 'the grande rivière' once more. My bear-skin all safe yet, but the wolves had 'totaciously chawed up' the deer's hides in their little amusement of last night. It is wonderful what quantities of solid flesh these scavengers of the prairie will consume. My bull, killed yesterday about two o'clock, was utterly devoured this morning at 4 a.m., when I went to look for the horses, nothing being left but some shreds of hide, the head, and horns and large bones.

To breakfast at Battle River, a good twenty miles off.

Fired a volley into several bands of buffalo, and slew five or six cows, a bull or two, and a cabri knocked over by 'Kill-bull.' At the place where we stopped for breakfast, at the riverside, we found the camp which a large war-party had but just left! the fires still smouldering, traces of the horses quite fresh at the pickets, and the grease still

on the cooking sticks. Had we come three hours sooner, we might all have been knocked on the head! ,

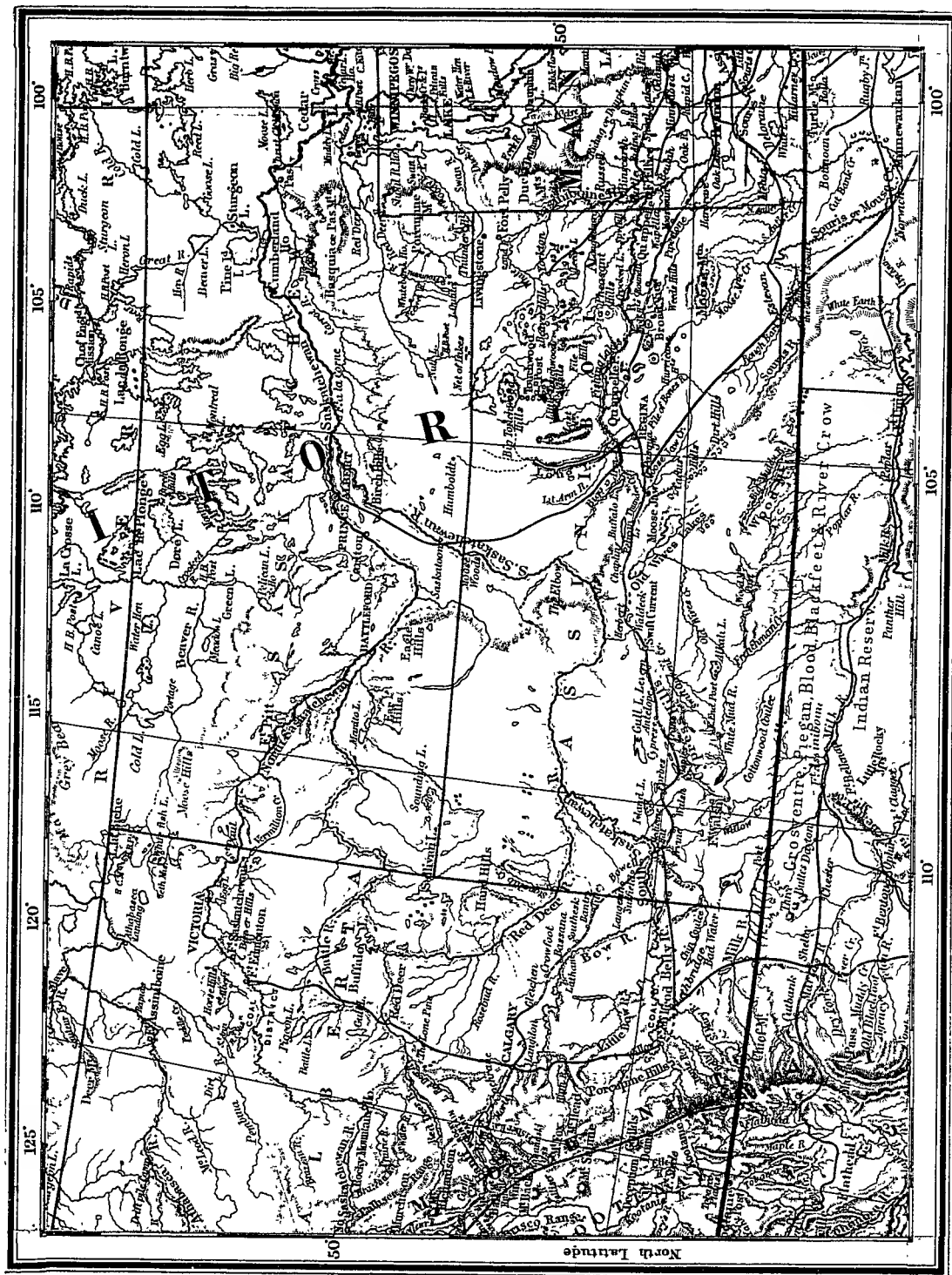
Bustled along at the wolf's trot all day, and reached Fort Pitt at sundown. A very long forced march, I am sure more than sixty miles.

FROM FORT PITT TO FORT CARLTON AND THENCE
TO FORT GARRY, RED RIVER.

SEPTEMBER 5TH TO 29TH.

Sunday, 5th, Monday, 6th, Tuesday 7th of September.—At Fort Pitt.

Making preparations for a start eastward. A number of the 'Braves' came in from the camps we had passed, between Fort Carlton and here, on our journey out westward, as all their young men have returned from war, to the number of 800 warriors. They had a great fight with the Blackfeet, somewhere near the American fort on the Missouri, and had taken many scalps. One fellow, 'The Great Squirrel,' had a piece of a Blackfoot brave's scalp tied in his hair, with said brave's ornaments attached thereto. He had shot two Blackfeet himself, through the pickets of the American fort in which they had taken refuge. He was very smart, his robe, metassins, and mocassins being heavily ornamented with bead-work. I tried to buy them, but he was going to the Strongwood Crees, either to visit them, or to steal their horses, whichever he might find most convenient, and would not sell his clothes, in case he might adopt the former alternative. I intend to visit their camp, and trade some curiosities on my way down.



Wednesday, September 8th.—Off at sunrise, George, myself, Acaapoh, and a Canadian boy with a cart, and seven horses, inclusive of the two Harriott was kind enough to lend me. Could get no further than the 'Rivière des Anglais,' in spite of all our efforts. Horses would not 'sauter,' and cart ran heavy. Day very hot.

Thursday, September 9th.—Very ill from surfeit. Arm all swelled, and hand full of sores, suffering even more than I did with the ophthalmia. Breakfasted late at Turtle River.

Passed a large war-party of Crees, upwards of a hundred men, on their way to the Blackfeet. Twelve of them ran a band of buffalo, close past us, and I joined them with 'Kill-bull,' caught a cow, but could not shoot her with the heavy rifle. Jumped off my horse, and picked a good cow out of a band that were crossing a ravine about 160 yards off. Indians much surprised, and said I must be 'Great Medicine!' Took what meat I wanted for ourselves, and gave them the rest, they having killed none. Smoked with the hunters and went on. Fine, smart, active young fellows, robes, skin, hair and all, as red as vermilion and red earth could make them.

Saw great numbers of buffalo to-day; but too anxious to get on, now that the bad weather is beginning, to hunt unnecessarily. Large tracks of burnt prairie, with not a blade of grass upon them. Camped at the 'Lac des Brochets,'

and had great difficulty in finding a green spot for the horses, so completely had the whole country been wasted by fire. A heavy storm of wind, thunder and rain at night.

Friday, September 10th.—Fine fellows to voyage with these half-breed hunters! So good-humoured, patient, and persevering, while their sagacity and resources in meeting all the difficulties and dangers of the wilderness are extraordinary. Acaapoh will run the trail of a lost horse, at full gallop, through the prairie, where I (who can track with any white man that ever followed game) can see no trace whatever! and in travelling along not even a bent twig, or blade of grass displaced escapes his notice.

A very wet day, blowing hard from the north-west. Breakfasted at the 'Rivière des Brochets' at the very same spot where we had camped with Harriott on the third day before reaching Fort Pitt, saw the remains of our fires, and the feathers of the goose I had killed, also the remains of some tow, with which George had cleaned the guns. An Indian came to us and told us that one of the large Cree camps was only a quarter of a day's march to the southward. I should have liked to have gone to trade, but had no time to spare. A long march through the rain to-day to the southward of our old track, out into the open prairie where there is no water. The wind 'right aft' acted like a sail on the cover of my cart, and helped it on much. The

prairie very hilly with high 'buttes.' Camped late at a lake, which proved not drinkable.

Saturday, September 11th.—A sharp frost. Killed a bull at the lake. Struck out over wide, open, rolling prairies. Acaapoh hoped we might find water to-day ; but not sure, never having been here before. Very ill and very thirsty, having drunk nothing since yesterday, at breakfast. Found a small herd of buffalo and prepared to run them for meat. Bran pinned a calf by the nose, and held it, till I stabbed it with my dag. I would fain have had a drink at the blood, but did not like to do so. Slashed the belly open, but no water worth drinking. Took the head and hindquarter. Acaapoh killed a young bull, the cows being very poor in this barren district, where there is neither grass nor water. Later in the day I saw a lake, which luckily proved to be fresh. That drink worth any money !

My veal was good, but the young bull proved rather rank. Soon after 'the spell' we passed many good lakes, and a little river of beautiful cold water, which flows into Blood-berry lake.* Killed a bull this evening. No more water. Travelled late through wide open plains among large salt lakes, but had to camp at dark, without fresh water. Acaapoh could not eat from thirst, and the others all unwell from trying to drink at salt lakes.

Sunday, September 12th.—A hard frost. The winter coming

* Blood-berry Lake, or, as in the maps, Red-berry Lake.

on rapidly, and I have many miles before me. I shall leave the cart at Carlton Fort, and take to loaded horses, in order to make long journeys.

Off at daybreak. Pushed along very fast to get a drink at the river, and by changing our cart horses once or twice, reached the bank of the river opposite Fort Carlton at about eleven a.m.

Monday, September 13th.—To-morrow we are to be off with Powyac. Acaapoh started this morning on the back track. Poor fellow! I made him a little present of one and a half yard of tobacco, two tinsel rings, and twenty balls and powder, and nothing would content him but coming a league and a half out of his way, from the 'horse guard' this morning, to thank me and to wish me 'bon voyage!' Would an English keeper have gone even half a mile out of his way, on a similar errand, had I given him a sovereign, after one day's covert shooting?

Prudent tells me that the Crees made a very pretty little 'shindy' down at the Missouri Fort. It appears that the Blackfeet had taken refuge in the fort, and intimidated the Americans. The Blackfeet fired from the bastions, and the Crees then attacked the fort, and tried to burn it, frightening the Americans out of their wits, and swearing they would kill and scalp them all, for harbouring 'the dogs' who shot at 'Fat John' (*i. e.* Rowan). The Blackfeet, on the other hand, swore they would kill the Americans, if they did not help

them to drive off their enemies. At last, after many had gone down on both sides, the Crees were attacked in the rear by some Piegans, whom they set upon; and though they lost many men, owing to the Piegans throwing themselves into the thickets, the Crees finally rushed into the fort and cut all the Blackfeet to pieces, with their dags and knives, taking thirty-eight scalps, only two escaping.

Tuesday, September 14th.—Powyac ill, and unable to stir. Dosed him with calomel and James's powders. A large party of Crees came in to-day to drink and trade. One or two very pretty girls among them, especially one, said to be a daughter of old Harriott's. A war-dance in the courtyard in honour of the scalps they had taken from the Blackfeet; after which they began drinking and trading, each bringing a bladder of grease, some pounded meat, or some dressed skins, and receiving in return the value in rum, which they poured down each other's throats—or had the rum poured down their own throats, by the man who served out the liquor!

Went to bed late, very much amused, and rather disgusted with the operation.

Wednesday, September 15th.—Started late, and crossed the south branch of the river, bag and baggage, before dark—all but the horses, the opposite side being burnt. Met some Crees on the way, who were going to the fort, and learned that they had killed a cow near our track. Rode on before, followed their back trail, and found their 'cache' of meat.

Helped myself to marrow-bones, ribs, 'filôts' and the 'dé-pouille,' and rejoined my people before they reached the river.

Thursday, September 16th.—Swam the horses over, at day-dawn, but lost much time arranging the loads. Travelled till two o'clock, through burnt ground, and 'mis à terre' at a little lake. Horses much distressed, being a very weak lot, and day very warm. Powyac very unwell. Travelled a short distance further, and camped early beyond the burnt ground. Powyac very ill. Had serious thoughts of turning back with him, swimming the river, and bringing another guide to the camp, if I could find an Indian at the fort. But few know the road ; and, only having passed it once, I cannot undertake to guide my people myself, lest we perish for want of water among the salt lakes.

Friday, September 17th.—Powyac better ! Determined to push on at all risks. Gave him some laudanum and a 'filet,' the 'Nor'-west' panacea. Salt water at breakfast, only a weak Glauber-salt decoction, however. Shot a goose, after a good stalk with 'Kill-bull.' Saw many large bands of buffalo, on the large plain at the edge of the woods, where I had had such sport on my way up. Beautiful 'running' ground ! I longed for a shy at them, but had no 'runner,' excepting Harriott's young one, and could not spare him from the pack. Stalked a small herd, and killed a cow for meat. Not a very good one, but she looked well as she stood. I took the 'dé-pouilles,' ribs and marrow-bones. Saw many bands in the

woods, but could not spare time to look up a good cow, as the sun was low.

Reached the little river at sundown. The narrow plain on both sides covered with buffalo. While my people were pitching, I tried to stalk a herd, but they got my wind, and I floundered into a swamp up to the neck.

Saturday, September 18th.—The wide desert now to cross, which borders on the north shores of the Great Salt Lake, where there is no water. A dreary, barren district! I had a small keg of shrub, with which I made a little feast for the people, and then emptied out the rest, and filled it with water from the clear cool spring. Only one gallon for four of us, for two and perhaps three days. Got a little water at a not very salt lake for breakfast, without touching our keg. Killed two fat cows before leaving the woods this morning with 'Kill-bull,' and took the prime meat.

Towards evening passed the spot where I had 'run' my first buffalo. Saw a large herd in the same place, and hoped to find water, in some of the deep holes in the water-course near them, where we had camped with Harriott. The animals had drunk all dry. Pushed on very fast till dark, and chewed bullets.

Sunday, September 19th.—Four horses missing! Searched all round in the vast plain in which we had camped, but could find no trace. Returned to camp about mid-day, burnt up with thirst, the day being very hot. Tried to eat

some ribs, but could not. Horses suffering much also, and would not feed. Started with just the number requisite to carry ourselves and the packs, it being impossible to remain and search longer. Our best horses gone, and those that remain very weak, and some lame. Powyac thinks our horses were stolen.

Travelled till night along the shores of Lac la Plume, which shone clear and glassy in the sun, tempting us to try a pull at it. Powyac swore it was rank poison, and that a horse had died once from drinking of it. We had smashed our water-keg against a stone before leaving the woods, and were thirty-six hours without one drop of water! Found a little dirty water in a swamp near the lake at sundown, with four worn-out old bulls standing in it. Horses and all dashed in, and soon finished what was left. Pushed on till late at night, and camped in the plain. Watched the horses, lest the Indians might take a fancy to the remainder.

Monday, September 20th.—Off before sunrise. Bid good-bye to Lac la Plume and reached the woods that border upon Lac la Pêche about ten o'clock. Beautiful, clear, fresh water. A good drink and a swim.

This lake very bonnie, surrounded with high woods, the leaves red, or with various tinges of orange and yellow from the late frosts. Horses much refreshed by the good grass and water. Pushed on to a lake where we had camped with Harriott.

Tuesday, September 21st.—Passed several small bands of buffalo during the day. I stalked and killed a good cow before breakfast, and George wounded another. Took aim at my cow between the eyes, and dropped her dead. Killed a bull at breakfast ; shot him between the eyes also, at one hundred yards distance, the second shot. The beggar, being pugnaciously inclined, as I approached to finish him and I being on foot, should have been in an unhandsome fix if ‘Kill-bull’ had failed me. I suppose this is my last buffalo!! Saw some Indians cutting up a cow they had killed. One came to us, calling out ‘Sis quah’ (*i.e.*, stop). I waited, and shook hands, and gave him what he wanted, *i.e.*, a piece of tobacco.

In great force, having pushed past our old camp before sundown. Powyac wished to stop, saying there was no wood further on, but I pushed on into the plain, and found some bushes near a good little lake. Lighted our fire with an old eagle’s nest ; a cosy camp, the bushes making a good shelter to windward. Powyac very sulky ; his dignity being hurt at not having been allowed to stop and have a chat with the Indians we had seen to-day ; or, as he pretended, to ask if there was danger on the road. Soothed him with a ‘filet’ and some tobacco.

Wednesday, September 22nd.—Pushed along over the plain at a merry pace. Changed horses with Powyac, and lent him my only spur to get on better. Powyac nearly made a

wrong turn down into some swampy marshes, extending miles to the north, and falling into a large lake where we should have been regularly pounded. Luckily I remembered being fixed at the same spot with Harriott, while scouring the country after ducks and cabris, and stopped Powyac in time, making him keep to the southward, as we had no horse power to spare, and still less time.

Had a fine hunt after a 'cayoté-wolf' at one of our old breakfast places, by the side of a lake. George broke its leg with a ball, and Bran ran up too, and tackled it. The wolf nearly worried poor Bran, and grinned uncommonly at me, as I rode up and shot it. Camped at night beyond the marsh, where we had dined on our second day, going westward from Beaver Creek.

Thursday, September 23rd.—A very sharp frost last night. When I awoke, found poor little Powyac's last buffalo-tongue roasting at the fire, and ate it all up while he was after the horses. Gave him a 'filet' instead, when he came back. Much better for him this cold morning! No water nearer than the Qu'Appelle River. Pushed hard from daybreak until twelve o'clock, and reached it to breakfast. A good trot the whole way. Horses terribly beat, having come what Powyac called a 'sacré bout.' Met a large camp of Crees returning from their trade at the fort, and going on their winter's hunt, all as smart as new blankets and capotes could make them.

This river, the Qu'Appelle, is certainly very lovely, running through a wide green vale, well wooded, and bounded on each side by very high 'côtés,' covered with fine timber. Three hours at the river, and reached Beaver Creek Fort before dark. Twenty-two good miles between 2.30 and 6 p.m. Had a bad fall, 'Wabatin'* being dead beat.

Friday, September 24th.—At Beaver Creek Fort. Old Monsieur Fisheer very civil. He evidently hates J. Rowan like the devil, and made out a very bad story about Rowan, in the affair of the Crees and the Blackfeet at the fort two years ago. But it is very natural that the Saskatchewan people should favour the Crees most. All their women are either Crees or half-breeds of the tribe, and each of them have children in the Cree camps. Still, I do not believe Fisheer's story, as it was 'un peu trop fort,' even for 'Fat John.'

Saturday, September 25th.—After a tender parting with little Powyac, started this morning with an English half-breed, George, and the Canadian boy. I don't like this half-breed at all, a very different kind of animal from old 'Manitou Kishick,' whom I had hoped to find in readiness to go with me. My present hero is a great swell, all belts and dags, and silk handkerchiefs from top to toe, having been steersman to one of the Hudson's Bay Company's boats to

* 'Wabatin,' the horse he was riding.

York and back, not at all like the half-breeds of the Saskatchewan. A bad horseman, and a stupid, sulky brute. However, I can take care of myself now, as the track is plain, and there is plenty of water.

Brought my old horses through to Lac Platte, where the horse guard is kept, breakfasting at Eagle-tail Creek.

Obliged to camp at the lake early, as my fresh horses could not be caught. Monsieur Fisheer has 'done' me (as Fat John said he would). Out of at least four hundred horses and mares, I could get nothing but twelve old screws, six of which had already been to Carlton with us on our way up country, and were consequently sadly deficient in that great *sine qua non* to good horse-flesh in the plains, *i.e.*, fat.

Sunday, September 26th.—Got off at last after a whole morning spent in catching horses with the 'cabréche.' Reached Rapid River after a very fast long march, and camped at some small lakes beyond. Had a considerable row with my half-breed, the beggar insisting upon shooting prairie hens for his supper, and giving them to the boy to carry, and making the boy and George drive the pack-horses. I shied all the produce of his 'chasse' into the river, and informed him that unless he dropped that amusement I should take his horse, give him some ammunition, and let him find his way back to Beaver Creek Fort, saddle, bridle, 'apichumoe,' blanket and all, on foot! as I knew my way now, just as well as he did. He growled uncommonly; but

we had two rifles to his old trading gun ; so he saw it would not do, and mended his manners from that day forth.

Monday, September 27th.—Another very long march and reached Pine Creek. Killed ducks enough for us all for supper, besides prairie hens. All the little lakes full of the former of every kind, from the large velvet duck as black as a coal to the little blue-winged teal. We miss the good fat cows ' appalas,' ribs, and marrow-bones that we used to feast upon, in the Saskatchewan, sadly.

Tuesday, September 28th.—Passed the ' Rivière de Champignons,' and camped in the middle of the long traverse to the Assiniboine, where the prairie stretches away on three sides like a vast calm ocean, the fourth being bounded by the fringe of woods that skirt the river, appearing blue and faint in the distance. A horse shut up to-day, and we could hardly get him to the camp.

Wednesday, September 29th.—At it again by daybreak, and reached the upper end of the Half-breed settlement to breakfast. Had a good wash in the river and a shave, while George was cooking. Reached White Horse plains about 2 p.m. Changed horses, and pushed on ahead to reach Fort Garry before dark (twenty-five miles).

Met several loads of hay on the traverse, and could hardly get my little wild Indian nag past them. He bolted and shied, and trembled all over as if he had the ague. Reached Sturgeon Creek at last, after the weary traverse of

eighteen miles. Slackened girths, had a smoke, a pull at the Creek, and let 'White-face'* feed round at the length of the 'cabrêche' for half an hour, and then pushed on into the settlement. 'White-face' in an awful quandary among the houses and windmills. They looked almost as strange to me as to him.

Overtook Wilder† out riding. He hardly knew me, and swore I had become a half-breed ; and I suppose I did look rather black and wild, what with sun and weather and half-breed's clothing and accoutrements. Reached the fort at sundown, and was instantly dragged into barracks, and dressed by the whole regiment. One brought a shirt, another a pair of trousers, another a coat, somebody else gave me a room and a pair of boots, and I was installed once more at mess, as if I had been one of them ! I felt as if I had got home again, among our fellows in the old First.‡

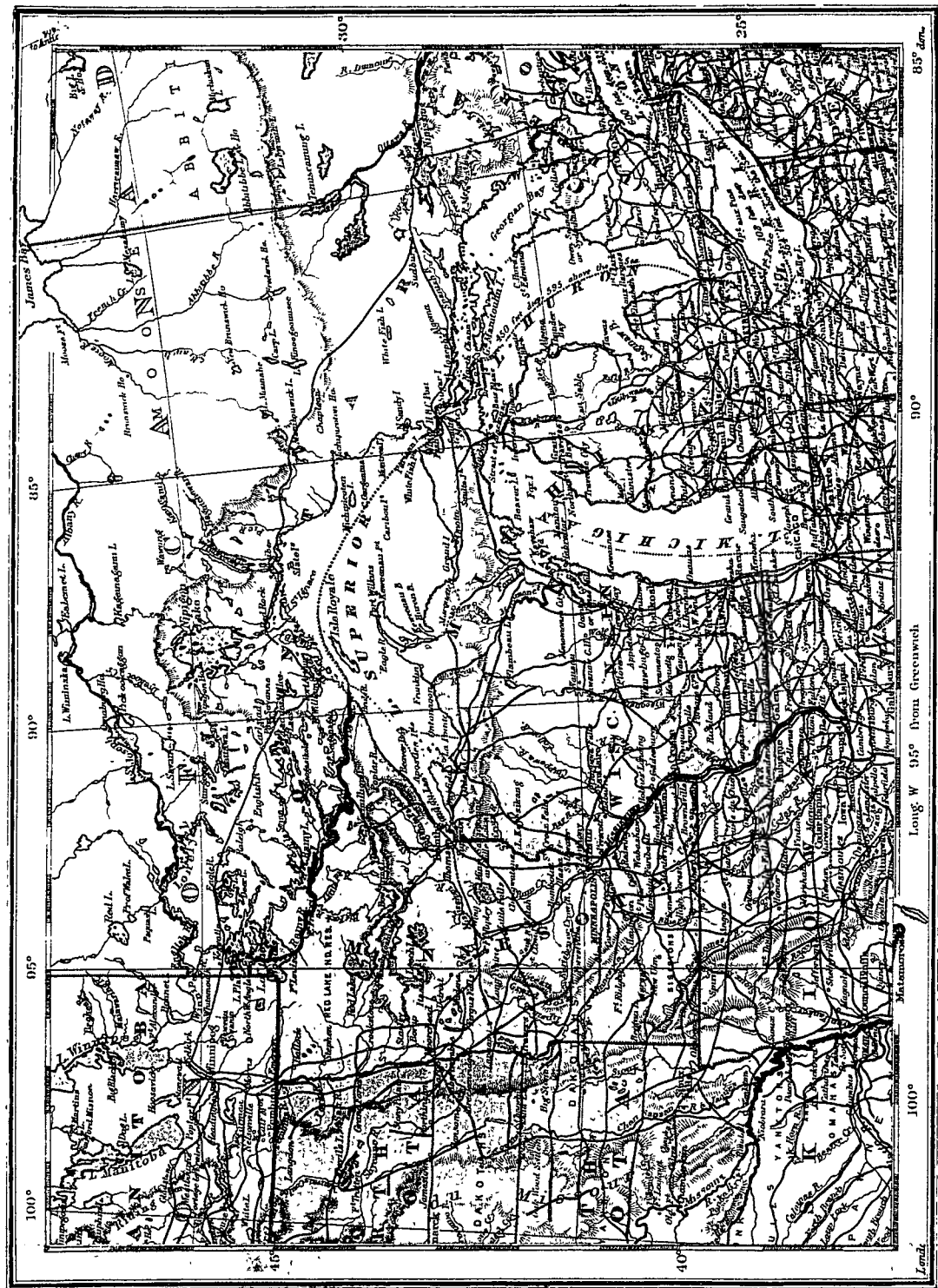
The whole regiment turned out to see my 'tail' arrive, and were much surprised at the wild appearance of both men and horses, accustomed as they were to the Red River half-breeds.

A wet night, and all my adventures had to be related in 'the Den' over the rum and water.

* 'White-face,' the horse he was riding.

† Wilder, one of the officers of the garrison at the Red River Fort.

‡ 'Old First,' the First Life Guards, in which regiment Frederick Graham had served several years.



FROM FORT GARRY, RED RIVER, TO ST. PETER'S
FORT, PARTLY BY CANOE.

SEPTEMBER 30TH TO OCTOBER 23RD.

Thursday, September 30th, and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of Oct.

At Red River. Poor Françoise Laronde very ill, wasted and pale, yet beautiful as ever. Her brother, and a German half-breed go with me to St. Peter's.

Drafted two of my nags, and took two fresh ones of McDermott's. I have great doubts whether my nags will pull through ; a fifteen days' march, and lots of provisions to carry, as there is no game ; 'mais il faut essayer.'

If I could only take the route through the plains, I should do well, as there are plenty of buffalo ; but no inducement would tempt these fellows to try it with so small a party, as the Dahcotas have declared they will kill any one (half-breeds especially) whom they may find on their hunting-grounds. If I had little François Lucie, or Acaapoh, or any of the real thoroughbred 'Coureurs des Prairies' of the Saskatchewan here, we would have a shy at the Sioux country 'coûte que coûte,' but these fellows are no more equal to the above-named, than a cockney is to a Highland deer-stalker !

Tuesday, October 5th.—Took leave of all my friends, male and female.

Swam the horses over the river, and camped five miles beyond the settlement. Wilder came to spend the night with me at my first camp. A great consumption of drinkables.

Wednesday, October 6th.—Wilder very much ‘bothered’ this morning, when I roused him out from under his blanket at sunrise! Caught his horse, and started him off. I hope he got safe back.

For two or three days, our road lay along the edge of the ‘Grande Prairie,’ a country full of small rivers and creeks, with a fringe of woods on the left hand, and the boundless prairie stretching away as far as the eye could reach to the westward, sometimes level, and sometimes rolling like the huge waves of the ocean, the ‘buffons’ being very swampy and bad to cross. Quantities of grouse all through the plains. Sometimes I could have fancied myself on the moors, the broods of prairie fowl were springing from all sides, chuckling as they went off, with a sort of bad imitation of the ‘nickering’ of a moor-cock. Some of the river banks were very pretty, and the timber much finer than any I had seen in the north, especially about Red Lake River.

Passed some missionaries on their way to the Indian settlement at Red Lake, with my old friend Jimmie Mackay* driving their ox teams.

* Old friend Jimmie Mackay—probably McKay, the half-breed, who had been the companion on the trip from the Red River to Manitoba in the first half of July.

On the sixth day we entered the Strong Woods, through which a ride had been cut, like those in an English covert—the way being sometimes intersected by bad swamps, marshes, and large lakes, through one or two of which we had to wade for miles up to our horses' bellies. The weather had now become very cold, with heavy snow-storms, and keen frosts at night, our blankets and buffalo-robcs being stiff frozen every morning.

Arrived at Crow River on the ninth day. Horses very weak indeed, and many with frightfully sore backs. Skirted the river all the following day, among the most magnificent pine timber I ever saw.

My two lads in a great funk about the Sioux war-parties, it being here that Corbet ran against one three months ago. Klcine showed me the place where they were hid, within six yards of the track, to the number of twenty. None of Corbet's party had their guns with them. Corbet himself was eating berries on foot, and passed by without seeing the Indians, and the rest would have passed likewise, had not a boy stumbled on a Sioux, while reaching over to get a larger bunch than common of the fruit. Had they passed by without seeing, or taking any notice, the whole party would probably have lost their scalps! As it was, Corbet returned, smoked with the Sioux, gave them food, and traded some pipes with them, and then pushed on, by a forced march, across the Mississippi before he camped, at a place where

they dared not follow, on account of their enemies the Chippewas being encamped at Crow Island in large numbers.

We camped at the junction of Crow River and the Mississippi after dark. While sitting round our fire, a canoe came over to us with what we supposed to be two squaws in it, from the other side. The half-breeds and I were laughing and joking about them in French, and I made Kleine talk to them in Chippewa, and try to coax them ashore, with the promise of some tea and sugar (always considered a great luxury by the Indian women). At the same time I made some further observations in French, at which the half-breeds laughed, and, to my surprise, the women laughed too, and bolting back into their canoe, pushed off like lightning, and vanished in the darkness.

Next morning, Mr. Macdonald, the Indian trader, came over to see me—and after I had bought a canoe of him, and had agreed with him that he should take charge of part of the horses until Kleine's return from St. Peter's Fort—I determined to descend the Mississippi with my baggage, and send Laronde by land, with three of the freshest horses, to bring back Kleine, himself, and their provisions.

My canoe was sent across from the traders' bark lodge with an old Indian, and one of the very loveliest half-breed girls I ever saw, who laughed and blushed, and told me it was she and her sister who had come to our camp the

previous night, sent by her father to ascertain who we were.

We ran down the river some distance, George and Kleine, myself and the Chippewa ; the river full of ducks and geese, so I dawdled along with the stream—now shooting down a succession of rapids, then paddling lazily through the long flats of water that intervened, and landing every now and then to have a stalk at the innumerable flocks of wildfowl congregated along the shore.

Our Indian, like all his race, proved a lazy old beggar, though a capital canoe man. He was also troubled with a most voracious appetite, and a capacity for smoking that astonished even me. Every half-hour he would lay on his paddle, and grinning horribly, would sing out 'Sagaço, sagaço skotek' (a smoke, a smoke, give me a light)! In camp he was worse than useless, as he would do nothing whatever but plague one for tobacco, food, or rum. Four ducks a day did he eat to his own cheek, and then grumbled because he had neither pemmican nor flour. As for loading and unloading, bringing wood and water, or lighting the fire, he would have nothing to do with it ; added to which he had a particular objection to wetting his feet, and would never help to get the canoe into the water on a frosty morning, or jump overboard when the river shoaled on us.

Kleine and Laronde, on the other hand, were both capital lads, like all Canadian half-breeds. They were always

cheerful, and merry as crickets, wet, or cold, or hungry, it was all the same to them, always laughing, and full of fun, and ready for anything.

On the third day we reached 'Little Rock,' an American trading post, after a very prosperous voyage, having, however, used up all our gum, in repairing damages, after sundry scrapes on shoals and stones, and with very little prospect of getting a fresh supply. That old devil of an Indian bothered me dreadfully, when steering the canoe down the rapids, as he would always shout and chatter in Chippewa in the most dangerous places, when the wrong stroke of a paddle, or the slightest inattention among the rocks and breakers, would have sent our frail birch-bark bottom to smithereens in a second! However, I 'got along somehow' (as the Yankees have it) by paying no attention to what he said, but watching his paddle very closely, taking great care never to get flurried, and keeping a sharp eye to the main channel before we entered the rapid (the great secret in good canoe steering)! By doing this, and a great share of good luck in addition, we shaved through some very nasty places without accident.

At Little Rock my old savage took his departure, as no inducement would tempt him to venture nearer to the Sioux, some of whom we might fall in with on the right bank of the river below Sank Rapids. I had great difficulty in supplying his place, for though there were plenty of half-breeds about

the establishment, the old Yankee trader knew he had me at his mercy, and could command his own price.

At last, the offer of two dollars a day for five days tempted him to give me a 'soi-disant' capital 'butte,' a Yankee half-breed who knew the river, and who 'guessed he could take me right away slick to the falls without touching a stone in the rapids,' so our want of gum would be of no consequence. I gave him the steering paddle, put Kleine as the other 'butte' and retired from the post of honour. We started very prosperously, and my Yankee hero was full of the wonders he meant to perform in running Sank Rapids, which he 'guessed was a tarnation ugly, crooked, and almighty swift bit of water,' yet in spite of which he 'had too much hickory in *him* to knock an inch of gum off her' on any 'tarnel stone' in the river. The words were hardly out of his mouth, when bump! scrunch we came atop of a big rock, over which I had seen the boil of water for the last five minutes! Two or three repetitions of the same process in the course of the next ten minutes—and luckily all in still water—convinced me of my pilot's incompetency, and obliged us to land, camp, and gum—our canoe being half full of water and the sun yet three hours high. I went duck-shooting, and also killed a 'coon,' a very fat one, which we ate for supper, though it looked uncommonly like a boiled cat when it came out of the kettle.

Next morning we tackled Sank Rapids, and by great good

luck, got safe down. Frost very sharp at night. Landed in a swamp to patch the canoe with grease. Found an old canoe in the course of the day and took all the gum we could scrape off her, and, with great economy, we managed to make this gum suffice us as far as the Falls of St. Anthony, which we reached on the morning of the fourth day. We made the portage and arrived at St. Peter's Fort, six miles lower down, before dark on the evening of Thursday, October 21st, our seventeenth day from Red River.

The River thus far, *i.e.*, from Crow Island to the Falls, flows through strong, hard-wood timber, and the channel is much divided by islands ; the shores are marshy, and the wild fowl, at this season of the year, innumerable. Below, and in the neighbourhood of, the fort, at the junction of the St. Peter's River with the Mississippi, the open prairie recommences, and the 'côtés' are very high and bold. The country is rich and fertile, and the colonisation consequently increasing rapidly ; but sickness is very prevalent during harvest time, as it is indeed generally along the banks of the Mississippi.

I was much amused at the Falls of St. Anthony by the curiosity of a large colony of 'Down-Easters,' who had just arrived, regarding my travelling arrangements. They could not understand the canoe at all (having only seen 'dug-outs' thereabouts) or how two men could carry 'such a large boat' ! and, upon seeing a fire lighted, a goose and two ducks

converted into 'appalas,' tea made, and breakfast ready in the twinkling of an eye after landing, one of them seemed suddenly fired with a desire for a wild life also, and exclaimed, 'Well, I guess you are mighty independent chaps! I should somehow like to join your company, if it warn't for them darned Injuns and buffalos and sich like.'

I found Captain Eastman, the commanding officer at the fort, very kind and civil. He invited me to stay with him, and during my visit, took me through all the Sioux camps in the neighbourhood and explained to me all that was curious and interesting in the ways and habits of the Sioux. He had lived among them all his life, spoke their language well, and was, what no other Yankee that I ever saw had appeared to be,* a good sportsman, a frank, straightforward soldier, and a gentleman!

The young Sioux braves were great fun! Upon Eastman's telling them that I had killed 'Wahkunka tiepe,' *i.e.*, a grizzly bear, single handed, I was treated with great respect, invited into every lodge and the 'calamet' lighted for me. One old fellow offered me a very pretty little lassie (his daughter), for the claws of the 'warrior bear,' and said he would prize them more than all the Chippewa scalps his young men had brought in this summer.

* This criticism on the character of the Yankees was much more common in 1847 than in more recent years.

Captain Eastman's wife was a would-be fine lady, very affected, and apparently very silly, speaking with a most villanous Yankee twang, and minus an eye. Apparently she was determined that her servants, or 'helps' (Yankyce), should not be able to crow over her, so they were all one-eyed ones likewise.

BY STEAMER, STAGE COACH, AND RAILWAY
TO NIAGARA.

OCTOBER 23RD TO 31ST.

Left St. Peter's Fort by the steamer *Senator* on the night of Saturday, October 23rd.

Two nights and two days running down to Golena. Dollars, and fevers, and ague, formed the principal subjects of conversation among the half-horse, half-alligator race of passengers on board. Indeed, the first named is generally the chief topic of conversation throughout this country ; nothing but dollars, dollars, dollars, with now and then a little gasconading about 'whipping the darned Mexicans' by way of variation, from morning till night.

I saw some of the fruits of the go-ahead system of speculation, on entering the confines of the lead district around Golena, where a large town had been commenced on the left bank of the river, several enormous houses built, and hotels to match. It was then discovered, when too late, that the whole would be a failure, upon which all was abandoned, and the buildings are now falling rapidly to decay.

We steamed up 'Fever River' on the morning of the second day, and started by the 'stage' for Chicago on the morning of Tuesday, October 26th. Forty miserable hours cramped up in a wretched, crowded open waggon on roads, compared with which a drive over a frozen ploughed field, would have been a luxury. How I longed for the free prairie for 'Kill-bull,' and to be on little Charley's back once again! Wretched work this charming (?) civilisation!

Crossed the foot of Lake Michigan in my old friend the steamer *Champion* which, if possible, was more filthy and uncomfortable than ever, and left St. Joseph's by stage for Kallimazoo at six in the morning of Thursday, 28th. Nineteen hours going forty-five miles, and only once upset, which the passengers and coachman agreed was a rare instance of good fortune!

The travelling can be compared to nothing that I know of, excepting one fancy oneself leaded up in a barrel, and rolled over Esk stone-bed* for some fifty miles, the road (?) being cut through heavy timber, and the coach driven through deep swamps and mud-holes, and over logs and stumps the whole way. The woods here, however, are certainly very fine. The timber, whether pine or hard wood, grows always perfectly straight and healthy, and the bolls of great size. The leaves also were all of the most beautiful

* The River Esk in Cumberland.

colours, being tinged by the frost, which, however, had been apparently very slight as yet hereabouts.

Arrived at Kallimazoo at one in the morning of Friday, 29th, amidst a perfect cascade of tobacco juice, and the most horrible oaths to match, the usual symptoms of excitement in that beast, the Yankee proper.

By rail to Detroit, and aboard the *Canada* the same evening, a very fine and very fast new steamer. Only twenty-four hours to Buffalo, and off the next morning by rail to the Falls of Niagara. Spent Sunday, October 31st, at the Falls.

THE END.

MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

THE LAST OF THE BUFFALO.

THIS Illustration is a photograph taken from the engraving of Albert Bierstadt's admirable picture, entitled 'The Last of the Buffalo,' which must have been painted after 1870. This picture, like other masterpieces by the same painter, of scenes in the Rocky Mountains, gives a good idea of the scenery frequently described in the foregoing pages, as well as of the 'countless herds of buffalo' so often mentioned, which have since been driven off to make way for the cattle ranches of white settlers, and have gradually diminished or died out, on many of the plains, where now graze the cattle, called by the Indians, 'the white man's buffalo.'

